

OOZE

DIARY

Ooze - Creepy Nites

The Diary

Original Diary

by

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Ooze - Creepy Nites

The Diary
Original Diary

by
A. DeLano

by
L. Spina

Edited by
Jon and Elaine Dean

Cover Artwork
by

John "The Brain" Spina

The Program
Story and Program

by
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August 1982
I've noticed a lot of locked doors. I know this guy sound silly at my
eye, but I can't wait to start exploring and discover what secrets lie
behind them! The keys must be buried somewhere among all this
chaos of furniture and boxes. The guys dumped everything in the hall
for now - they'll be back tomorrow to move it all into the rooms.

I need your help.

My dear Uncle Cheez Burger left me this diary in his Will. Unfortunately I hadn't had the time to read it until recently, but I recommend that you read it immediately - I am sure it holds some valuable clues for us.

You must help me to find out why my uncle had to die such a terrible death; who could have hated such a sweet old man so much that they could have... well, you know what is described on the death certificate.

Some parts of this diary almost made me cry.

Only one person could write like that - my uncle Cheez Burger...

Ham Burger, September 1982

The hall before they could start still, once I've managed to clean and
polish all the windows the whole place will brighten up.

The ball is overlooked by a labyrinth wooden gallery... You know, when
I stood up there I actually felt like a king watching his court. A
wonderful feeling of grandeur and power which was very amusing. At
first I was like a child with a new toy, busily setting about dusting the
walls of the gallery then I put up some paintings, and all the while the

August 14th, 1982

Dear Diary,

At last! August 14th! Words can't describe the happiness I feel inside. I have waited for this day for months. You know, it must be very rare that someone of my age longs so much for something as I have longed for Carfax Abbey. If only Polly were here to see it. She would have adored it...

As I write, I'm sitting by the fireside. Those burly removal guys from Dumpwater and Sons left just over an hour ago, allowing me to take a real good look around my new home. No-one has lived here for years... it's a little run down, but I'll start to put that right first thing in the morning.

The old place is bursting with character... I've noticed that total darkness seems to surround the house... you know, even this morning when the sun was shining brightly, almost all the rooms were full of dark shadows. The removal guys had to clean and open the windows in the hall before they could start! Still, once I've managed to clean and polish all the windows the whole place will brighten up.

I've noticed a lot of locked doors. I know this may sound silly at my age, but I can't wait to start exploring and discover what secrets lie behind them! The keys must be buried somewhere among all this chaos of furniture and boxes. The guys dumped everything in the hall for now - they'll be back tomorrow to move it all into the rooms.

The hall is overlooked by a fabulous wooden gallery... You know, when I stood up there, I actually felt like a king watching his court. A wonderful feeling of grandeur and power which was very amusing. At first I was like a child with a new toy, busily setting about dusting the walls of the gallery, then I put up some paintings, and all the while the

removal guys kept on bringing in furniture and boxes, stopping only for the odd swig of cold beer. Sure I know you shouldn't put the cart before the horse but I enjoyed trying to improve my new home... I noticed a couple of the guys grinning behind my back, they probably take me for a senile old fool.

I fixed up the little light drawing-room near the hall; the bed and a little round table and a chair - I'm beginning to feel at home already! This will be my cosy refuge until I have arranged the rest of my new home. I'll probably make a start on the first floor tomorrow morning. I'm getting real tired now, writing is difficult. Time to grab a good nights sleep in order to be fit for the return of Dumpwater and Sons!

PS.: I've just remembered... when we arrived this morning I noticed that there is almost no greenery around the house. There are big craggy old trees in front of the house and yellow and brown weeds all over the place... it's wierd... the trees have hardly any leaves, even though it's August.

August 15th, 1982

Today we finished the distribution of furniture around the house. Mr. Treeoak - he's one of the removal guys - helped me finish tidying up each room so we could put the furniture in.

I was up at 6a.m. and set to cleaning the small drawing-room on the first floor. It has a quaint little glass window overlooking the tower (I haven't found any keys yet and I'm just dying to see what's behind the locked doors in the tower). The guys arrived at about 8 a.m. They brought up my old harpsichord and some furniture. It looks so cosy now, and with the newly cleaned windows the sunlight streams in making the place look much friendlier than it did at first. Even the walls and carpets seem to be brighter, as if they absorbed the sunlight!

Around 10, Mr. Hewlott (he's the lawyer from Hewlott and Package in Denborough who had arranged the house purchase) arrived and welcomed me to the neighbourhood. He really seemed quite surprised when I showed him round the cleaned and furnished rooms.

He's an odd character... something he said made me feel... well, uneasy... but I can't for the life of me think why. He said in a very somber tone 'I sincerely hope you will be at peace here, Mr. Burger' and looked very sad. I asked him what he meant, but he tried to change the subject. Eventually he said he had not meant anything by the remark and was just making conversation. But he had managed to make me so uneasy that I was quite glad when he left about 30 minutes later!

By 4 in the afternoon the removal guys were through, and the mountain of boxes in the hall had disappeared. The guys sat on the stairs for a while talking, sank quite a few beers, and then left at 5 sharp.

I set to work unpacking boxes - I figured the library was a good place to start. There is something about the musty smell of old books - dozens of yellowed pages and leather covers soon started to fill up the long high shelves. I took my time - after all, I have all the time in the world now. It's funny how you always thumb through books that for some reason catch your attention. I became so engrossed in one that I hadn't noticed it getting dark!

I stood at the window and watched the sun disappearing behind the hills, bathing everything in a glorious deep red haze as it set. Gradually everything lost colour and shape, and darkness fell. It's so peaceful here. I haven't managed to unpack even a quarter of the books, and it'll take weeks to finish at the rate I'm going. But hell, I'm in no hurry!

August 16th, 1982

Today was one of those days - you know, bad from start to finish.

I'm usually a very deep sleeper - nothing wakes me - but last night I was woken by... well, some strange noises. Creaking floorboards and the like. I couldn't sleep a wink after that. I sat listening in the darkness. If it's wood-worm I'll have to get them some quieter jackboots! I really don't know what the hell it was though.

At one point, I reached for my gun (can't break the habit of keeping my trusty old 18th century beauty under the pillow) put on my slippers and went 'hunting'... silly old fool that I am. I crept around, found the light switch and... wham! Gun pointing I quickly span around in a circle. The sudden, sharp stabbing pain in my hip soon put an end to my bravery, and doubled-up with pain I retreated back to bed with my arthritic hip reminding me of my age once more. Despite the agony, I did laugh at myself... what a frightening sight I must make... in my pyjamas, slippers and an antique old gun in my hands...

But I swear the damn noise was getting louder! So I put down the gun and managed to hobble to the door... I held it slightly ajar and peered outside. I could see into the hall. Nothing. I waited. Nothing. I remember feeling an icy draft at my feet. Then I noticed one of the old armors seemed to be glowing from inside, as if filled with life. I rubbed my eyes; my imagination was running away with me. I had another look... the armors still glowed. I thought it might be an apparition but... no, all that's nonsense isn't it?

I recall a shiver running down my spine, but it wasn't just an old man's fear. It was much too cold for an August night. So I closed the door. I hadn't found the rattling sound. I stood there... pathetically trying to think. I recall... or was I dreaming... glancing at the window.

It was glowing blue! Curiosity got the better of me and I pulled the curtains apart, but only the minimum necessary to make a small viewing hole. Carfax seemed to be shrouded in a swirling fog which had an eerie blue tint to it.

Then the old church clock struck one.

As I watched, the fog seemed to disappear and then I noticed... nothing! Absolutely nothing. Not a sound. This silence seemed more sinister than the groaning and rattling noises that woke me in the first place! I **told myself** that it would be best to go back to bed and try and forget **all about it**, and that I was in a dream and none of this was real.

By morning I wasn't convinced.

Firstly, my back ached badly. Secondly all the books in the library had fallen from the shelves. Well, if it wasn't a dream... then what? I just can't and don't want to believe in apparitions and such nonsense, and there must be a logical explanation. I decided I would have a chat with Mr. Hewlott about it.

I began putting the books back on the shelves for as long as my back would let me. After that I carefully unpacked further boxes and right now I'm sitting at the desk in the library completely exhausted, hardly able to hold this pen. The thought of my beautiful... cosy... bed... I can barely keep my.. eyes open...

PS.: Will this night be as noisy as the last, I wonder?

August 17th, 1982

Shortly after I got up this morning I had a strange, dare I say sinister adventure... but who would believe an old man saying that he clearly heard three voices in the library - especially when there was only the old man in the house?

Perhaps it was ghosts?

Even as a little boy I didn't believe in such childish nonsense and with the passing of the years this attitude became stronger. Nevertheless it was a funny feeling when I went to the library at about 6 am - it was still pitch black outside - to fetch my cigarettes. I was about to open the door, when I heard loud laughter from within - it was as clear as the ticking of the big clock next to me. I froze. Burglars.. or... tramps I thought.

I distinctly heard a deep, loud voice say:

"...You don't believe me capable of turning this impertinent intruder out of Carfax Abbey? Let me tell you, anybody who does not think me, Lancelot, courageous enough to turn out and even kill this poor creature, this living buffoon, will be damned to serve OOZE forever and ever..."

This seemed to be followed by some anxious whispering, and then I heard more conversation, which if my memory serves me correctly started with a second voice saying:

"Lancelot, Lancelot... don't say things like that. Leave Ooze out of the matte-r-r."

"You are afraid Vino? Afraid of him drinking your wine, ha ha!", the third voice laughed.

"Me? I not an afr-r-aid per-r-rson! You ar-r-e the weasel among us,

Ludus, we all know that!"

"What did you say, you old wine bottle? I, Ludus, formerly jester to the king, one-man entertainer of the royal court and best joker of all times... I am accused of being a coward? Listen, you old wine-cask, when the enemies of the king in his 13th year of reign... well,... 2 years before I was locked up by wish of the Duke Higpole because I addressed him as Duke of Pighole..., well, his majesty was attacked and I took the sword of one of the attackers and killed twelve men!! And while I killed'em, I even told the joke of the farmer who..."

"Seven,... you only killed seven of them, Ludus!"

"Seven... hah! Oh no Sir! I killed twelve... and two dogs! I was not only extre-e-e-mely witty but also courageous".

"Ludas, it was seven and an old cat when you told the stor-r-ry 80 year-r-rs ago".

As I stood listening I could hear loud hiccups coming from the one I took to be called Vino.

"Don't lie to us, coward!", the grumbler roared, "Ludus, it weren't that you killed twelve men and two dogs, but it were twelve men and two dogs had to search for-r you while you sat shiver-r-ring up in the highest oak tree four-r miles away..."

"...Well..." , Ludus started a heated reply, but was cut short by a loud roar of laughter: "Ha-ha-ha, I heard that also. But how can either of you talk of heroic deeds? It's only I, the noble knight Lancelot, daring executioner, who has the right to do so. Did I ever tell you how I kept the enemies of my father in check for seven years until he came to support me? Or did I forget to mention what the king said to me? 'Lancelot', he said, 'when we attack, you will take on half of the enemy and with the help of god, me and my 2000 soldiers will

overwhelm the other half.' Oh yes! I really fought but what did you do? You climbed up trees like cowards, both of you! And you, Vino, my cousin by blood, instead of following in my footsteps you were a slave to alcohol all your wretched life. You haven't seen sunlight since you were a boy of 10 because you preferred the wine cellar of your father instead of fighting. No wonder your father cursed you when he died. Cursed you to stay here forever... and cursed me as well, because I didn't put an end to your wrong doings. And then you drowned in that damned wine-cask..."

"Be-e-eautiful death, I'd like to r-r-repeat it, hohoho!"

I could distinguish the hiccuping sound again.

"Beautiful death? Beautiful death? Hah! You know nothing! Listen to what Lancelot the noble knight tells you: Only death on the battlefield, eye to eye with the enemy, his sword crossing yours, a blow, a stab ... finished - that is a beautiful death. And this stranger living in Carfax Abbey will have the privilege of such a beautiful death..."

"Well...", Ludus' wry tone interrupted, "...You certainly haven't had the privilege of such a beautiful death have you, my dear eye-to-eye-Lance. When Grumpy the Grumbler killed you with his axe it was from behind - you were running away!"

"Me? On the run? Take that, you ruffian. Be your tongue which has only tasted pig swill and foul water damned thrice. And now this stab... and step..."

With every step I could hear one more book fall from the shelf. At first I had been confused, then a little afraid, and finally just a bit angry... after all, who the hell was using my library for their private feud? I decided to have a look, after all, I am the master of the house now. I pressed the handle carefully so that the creaking couldn't be overheard and opened the door slowly. The door was hardly ajar when I heard

Lancelot's voice say: "The mortal - get away... quick!"

I threw the door open and shouted, "Stop right there! What...!"

I couldn't believe my eyes. There was nothing there apart from some books which had fallen to the floor, in fact everything seemed normal. There was no trace of anyone in my library. Only three empty bottles of wine. And I certainly couldn't remember drinking three bottles of wine!

Sitting here now, I still can't believe what happened. Could it be that... perhaps I had drunk some wine, and under the influence of alcohol I mistook the rustling of the curtains and the whistling of the wind for voices? After all, nobody could disappear that fast. Later I ran into the vicar of Denborough while shopping in the village. He had never heard of tramps or anything strange at all at Carfax and he couldn't think of any explanation concerning these 'people' in my library.

I will take much more care with alcohol in future.

August 18th, 1982

I really feel at home in Carfax Abbey. It already has an air of intimacy and familiarity. Each room seems to possess an individual character, and even the front of the Abbey, which at first I considered quite sinister looking, seems welcoming. During my walk this afternoon I had a look at it from a hill just north-east of here which gives a splendid view over the estate, spoilt only by the nearby cemetery. After the walk, which led me through some neighbouring land I had a leisurely dinner by the fireside and then I read for a little while.

I think I'll go to bed early tonight because the fresh air, long walk and the delicious meal seem to have made me very tired. Hopefully tonight won't be interrupted by any noises. I guess old houses do creak and rattle - but it still makes me a little nervous. However, this is my new home - Carfax and I will just have to learn to get used to each other!

August 19th, 1982

I slept so soundly last night. When the door bell rang at 10:30 I had to fight my way out of the bedcovers! I expected it to be Mr. Hewlott, but it was the postman bringing a parcel. He seemed like a nice guy - Mr Evans - but he kept on asking if everything was alright, which I thought to be very odd, almost as if he knew about my experiences. When I asked him he evaded my question and just said,

"Well, there's a lot of gossip in Denborough. I was only thinking about the loneliness out here in Land's End."

But Land's End is located in the south-west of England... Mr. Evans had an answer for that one too: "This place is also known as Land's End by the locals because of an old old legend - something to do with this place supposedly being the other end of the world. Anyhow, can't hang around chatting, I'm late. No peace for the wicked, eh Mr Burger? Good day...!"

And with that he took his old bike and cycled off without looking back. As you can imagine, I was quite surprised by the encounter. Back inside I opened the package - it was some books I was expecting. I was especially pleased with the book on 'Ghosts, Goblins and Monsters of Scotland'. Thumbing slowly through the book, I couldn't get Land's End out of my mind... and then a paragraph on Loch Ness distracted me. I found the story extremely interesting and read through it at once. The rest of the day was a mixture of thoughts about Loch Ness and Land's End.

Oh yes, something else I've remembered... I was about to throw away the package wrapping paper, when I noticed a postcard - postmarked 'London', and instead of a name and address these words were written in a strange hand: 'To the Intruder, Horror House'

Beneath this were a few lines in the same trembly hand: 'Be Careful... for whatever You do, Ooze Does it too... We'll get you'

There are some cranks about. What will they think of next? I'll ask Mr. Evans about the card next time I see him.

The kettle is whistling, must stop here. I just can't understand how I ever drank coffee which just keeps you awake. These days, I think there is nothing better, than a nice cup of tea... I have always had a cup before bed since my dear Polly died.

Dear Polly... she would have loved this place...

August 20th, 1982

What happened last night?

I had hardly got into bed when the noise started. The roar of the guns during the last war seemed like a whisper compared to that! It came from the attic. What was it? Bleary-eyed, I jumped out of bed with thoughts of rats and mice marching about in jackboots, and having a party! Slippers on, I got my keys and off I went. As I made my way to the attic, I remembered the real estate agent's words, that the reason for Carfax Abbey's low price was because of it's age. Huh! Perhaps I was the only person on earth that would ever consider living in it... I had soon convinced myself of my rats and mice theory, but then... laughter! I hesitated. First the voices in the library and now... this? Whatever it was.. I wanted to know about it there and then and I headed quickly upstairs to the attic. As I drew nearer, I was able to distinguish several voices... some of them sounded very familiar: "Dr-r-rink some mor-r-re, Holunder, you'll be better-r-r at playing ninepins, old Tear-r-r the-heads-off..."

Someone was rolling their r's again.

My experience in the library wasn't a dream then, and I definitely wasn't drunk now! I ran a hand through my hair, desperately trying to make sense of it all, but before I could collect my thoughts another voice - one that I fancied I hadn't heard before - replied:

"The heads, dearest Vino (- Ahhh!-) the heads are old"

Did that voice say 'heads'? I decided to get closer to the trap-door in order to hear better. As I slowly approached the voice continued: "Look my friends at this head here.. it's old. As you all know I haven't had the opportunity to get any new ones lately! (- quiet laughter -) I got it from MacPimple the landlubber (- roaring laughter -) Since it's lost almost

all its hair, the panic in its eyes is more fun than its quality as a ball. Do you remember the story of how it came into my possession? Young Archie MacPimple, a curious landlubber made a bet with one of his drinking pals that he would spend a whole night in Carfax Abbey. In Carfax Abbey, hoho! And now I hear you ask, did he get to collect his winnings? Hohoho! No-o-o, hohoho, one measly hour was all he could stand. I played with him, appearing here and there, chasing him from Foltair's cellar up to this attic and back again! That was real fun. I had a wonderful time..."

There was a pause until the voice continued thoughtfully, "Unfortunately Archie didn't find it as amusing as I, and when after an hour of being completely exhausted he stood in this exact spot (- stamp upon the floor -) and I shouted at him 'You miserable worm. You wanted to try me out! Say your last prayer before we go bowling!', of course he didn't know what I meant and his eyes had this surprised look of shock and horror; and then I tore off his head! Hoh, and do you know what happened next? His head was completely cut off, but his eyes took on that wonderfully fearful expression they still have. I don't want to praise myself but even the dead are afraid of me!"

Roaring laughter filled the blackness around me and seemed to shake the house. The noise made it possible to sneak nearer and when I came up to the trap-door I summoned up my courage, opened it carefully, and proceeded to climb up...

...and the next thing I recall, it was late in the morning and I was laying in bed.

Dreams very often seem realistic but could this be a dream? I lay there thinking, desperately trying to remember more. Yes... I recall a severed head rolling at me... strange characters in funny disguises surrounding me... only a dream?

But what could have caused such a dream? My big dinner last night? Surely not... Perhaps I am going senile.

I wanted to know for sure and returned to the attic - trembling. Yes... there were the keys, still up there! I looked around. Nothing.

Sitting here reflecting, I conclude that someone is trying to make a fool out of me. I must do something to put an end to this nonsense, and I've decided to fit new locks. Everywhere. I'm not going to be fooled by some wise-guys trying to scare an old man with their disguises and rolling rubber-heads. Their game will come to an end when they find the doors locked! And if this doesn't stop them, a little lead shot in their butts should do the trick!

The village locksmith came this afternoon - I didn't tell him anything, just asked him to change the locks. He said the wierdest thing - he said 'that won't help much' - as if he knew why I wanted them changed.

Tonight I will lie in wait! I'll find out just who enters my home without permission and give them a surprise. I'll grab a nap now in order to be ready for them later on.

August 21st, 1982

To everybody I am well known as a realist. A down-to-earth man. But it is not easy for me to write down what has happened in the last few days because if anyone ever reads this... well, they'll think it was just the ramblings of a lonely and senile old man.

Perhaps it is...

But, dear diary, I'm sure that I'm as far from being senile as I could be. I am thinking clearly, rationally, and have my senses about me, of that I'm convinced. It's my knowledge which must be full of gaps... that prevents me from adequately understanding what I have seen.

I thought it might be trick or treat youngsters responsible for those sleepless nights. What naivety and ignorance of the unknown. Modern man can indeed be a very silly creature. When men keep on disappearing without trace at specific places, when thousands swear to have seen something defying explanation, when fairy tales tell of ghosts and demons we just laugh. 'Ghosts and phantoms only exist in the minds of kids' we say. We're so stubborn that we fail to see the obvious.

Sure, a lot of it may be imagined or dreamed. 'Children's imagination...' and that's how we put aside all their stories. But... just imagine... what if children are more sensitive than complacent grown-ups? If only we would listen more carefully to them, then... oh.. now I am rambling. But... if we do not want to believe in something then we find a lot of explanations - or we don't listen at all. How can you explain why some people possess unusual abilities, who can influence a compass, move or even deform objects using their will-power? What do we really know about ourselves and our surroundings?

No! I'll do it. I'll write down as much of what happened as I can remember - it may sound like a dream... I only wish that were true...

Yesterday... yesterday morning... I woke up... breakfast was prepared. There, next to me on the bedside table was a tray with a full breakfast. Steaming hot coffee, fresh rolls, strawberry jam... even a boiled egg. I was sleepy, and thought nothing of it... Polly often made me breakfast in bed... but it was only when I reached for the roll that... it hit me...

If I was the only living thing in Carfax Abbey - then who the hell had prepared breakfast?

I remember going cold. Without any further thought, I leaped out of bed and charged out of the door ready to undertake a full scale search. But something blocked my way.

A voice said: "Where to, Cheez?"

"To the kitchen", I replied without thinking.

"But I've already prepared breakfast. By the way, I am Ludus."

"You? Oh. Yes, that's fine."

With that, I turned and walked straight back to the bed-room. I must have still been half asleep, for it took me quite a while to realise the significance of the last 30 seconds. I turned around quickly, and saw - nothing! 'Ludus' had gone, vanished! The hall was empty as well. I searched the rooms systematically until hunger drove me back to the bed-room. Never mind who prepared that breakfast it looked alright! Coffee was almost cold but still drinkable. I kept the egg until last. As I cut off the top, a red liquid spurted out of the hole and hit me between the eyes. Damn! That crazy guy Ludus must have lain in wait for that moment, for as I reeled with surprise, the door opened and he appeared, chuckling:

"Special Room-Service Egg. Ketchup eye-lotion. Very healthy, hoho!" and with that he left again. I sat with my mouth open, as I realised he had not walked... but floated!

I had a tin of Corned Beef and an orange for dinner. Despite being

very hungry I couldn't eat anything more substantial. I was very nervous about recent events... the state of my mind... was it torturing me? I kept on turning round because I could not shake off the feeling I was being watched. I got depressed and on edge. To calm my nerves I decided to take a walk. The fresh air would help. I strolled through meadows, up the hill and down the other side and after some time I forgot all about the mysterious events, and concentrated on the beautiful sun drenched countryside around Carfax Abbey. Thoughts of Land's End entered my head again for some reason...

It was a wonderful walk. Around 4pm I turned back because I was starving. Lost in my thoughts I had walked so far that the sun had almost gone down when I got back to Carfax. As I approached from the cemetery, I glanced at some graves and... here we go again, this sounds crazy... but I swear I saw a skeleton! It sat on the grass leaning against a moss covered wall, waving and shouting:

"Help me! I'm cold. Gimme your coat to cover my bones. Please I won't do you any harm."

"I'm outa' here" was my immediate thought, just get away. I hadn't run like that for years and only when I had reached a side door to Carfax and unlocked it did I dare turn around. To my horror the skeleton was rattling around the corner of the moss covered wall and heading in my direction, arms outstretched. I ran inside, slamming the door shut behind me. I nervously peered out of a window, just in time to see the skeleton... disappearing. The rattling of the bones became less and less, and finally everything had melted into thin air but a bony waving hand. I turned away, exhausted and breathing heavily. After I had caught my breath I dared to open the door again. I couldn't see the skeleton... but there was Ludus.

"May I come in, Cheez?", he said politely and floated over the threshold.

It must have all been too much for me. I fainted...

When I came to I heard a voice saying: "...he still lives. What a pity. His head has got just the right shape for bowling. Pity, pity pity... but we could..."

I fainted again.

When I finally came round my face was wet and a sponge lay at my side. I desperately struggled to get up.

"Hello", I shouted, "What's the matter! Face me! Who are you? Hey, can you hear me?"

I could hear a whisper in my ear, "Psst, don't wake up Ooze!"

It was Ludus. I recognized his voice although I could not see him. I wasn't as alone in Carfax Abbey as I had first thought, that much was certain. I felt wobbly, exhausted and tired. Looking out of the window I could see the cemetery peaceful at the moment - no skeletons. The only sign of life was in the window of the chapel where a flickering light could be seen.

...Flickering light?!

No, definitely no, no NO! The day had been exciting enough, I'd had enough! I wasn't interested in any flickering lights anywhere! I just wanted to sleep. In the bedroom I almost fell over something hard but didn't give it a second thought and once in bed I drifted into a sound, dreamless sleep.

It was the next morning that I noticed my diaries of the years 1925-30 on the floor. Some had been opened and my pen lay amongst them, dried out, cap missing! I looked closer and noticed some comments written close to my entries. Next to a report on a trick we played on our history teacher at school it said "Super". There were other remarks such as "Magnificent", "Top" and even "Exuberant".

Just then, I became aware of a loud noise coming from the hall. Some of the armors had started a fight. Pieces of rusty silvery metal flew through the air, hitting the ground with an almighty crash. Can

you imagine! Down in the hall the armors beating each other up... Don't ask me why, but suddenly everything became clear - I charged down the stairs like a madman possessed, grabbed one of them and shouted:

"Gotcha. You guys have tried to frighten me to death over the last few days. I almost believed it was ghosts haunting Carfax Abbey!"

Now I was sure it had been some lads from the village playing tricks on me.

I opened the visor...

... and found myself face to face with the bony skeleton of the day before.

"Little human", it growled through yellow, chattering and chipped teeth, "why do you disturb our home. You're gonna pay for it!"

I let go of the armor and started to walk backwards... slowly... but was halted by a wall of tin. Whilst I had been busy challenging one of the armors, the others had lined up behind my back, circling me slowly. Their visors were also open and each helmet revealed new horrors. It was dark in the hall. When I got up it had been daylight and now ... the moon was shining through the window and thick, unforgiving fog surrounded the house. And now I was being stared at by a half-rotten face whose foul breath almost made me faint. The eyes lay deep in their sockets and the cheek bones were bare. Something grabbed me from behind, spun me round, and I looked at another horrible grimace. I felt sick. It's odd the things you notice when you're terrified - but I noticed how the pale moonlight coloured the blood-crusting face with a blue tint. I couldn't recognize anything but the eyes. And they were... well, horrible. They didn't seem like human eyes; they were wicked, cruel and somehow demonic. My heart pounded so hard that it hurt. I wanted to be anywhere but here. The creature moved its jaw, revealing sharp mouldy, brown teeth. It spoke in a deep, gruff, yet gentle tone:

"Why you stare at me, mortal? Never seen how accomplished nature can be?"

Something grabbed my arm and forced me round. I looked into the face of what appeared to be a gnome now. He had to stand on a step in order to look right into my face. A malicious cruel and cold grin cut the pock-marked skin in half and showed black rotten tooth stumps. The green eyes changed colour and began to glow. They told of untamed greed and a desire for blood! These creatures made Ludus seem friendly! They were... monsters... yes, monsters in the true sense of the word. Beasts ready to cut my throat and as that thought crossed my mind, the dwarf took off his gloves revealing long fingers and dangerously sharp claws. With a sudden movement, he slashed his claws over my throat. I felt no real pain, but I could feel the blood pumping, running warm, The eyes of the monsters looked greedily. This was my only chance! I pushed the gnome aside and ran up the stairs. Before the beasts could react I had already reached the top. They looked angry and gesticulated wildly. I carried on running to the library. There was my Smizz & Wesson. Thoughts raced. I had hardly taken it out of the drawer when the first monster rattled through the door. Immediately I pulled the trigger without taking aim. The bullet blasted a big hole into the armor, disappearing in the foul body. A dark liquid oozed out of the hole and trickled down the rusty armor to the floor. The monster staggered around and then fell heavily to the floor. The others entered! I was about to fire again but something grabbed me from behind, causing me to drop the pistol, and swung me around. Again I stared into the skull of the skeleton! It shone in the pale moonlight and its jaw chattered continually. The rest of the pack now reached me and I felt hopeless. They discussed how to put an end to my life - the gnome kept talking about 'slicing up' all the time.

"Foltair" said the skeleton. "As a torturer you should know best that he'd be of no use afterwards. What about the iron- maiden? That's

supposed to be good for your complexion, haha.”

My life flashed before my eyes.

But then... a deafening thunder, a roaring bluster shook Carfax Abbey, and monsters drew back.

“Ooze”, the skeleton chattered, and disappeared into thin air again. The gnome, muttered: “Ooze, we woke him! His rage will be terrible! He will...”

Before he could say any more, the floor opened right in front of us and splinters of wood flew through the air like lethal weapons. If it was possible for monsters to sweat with fear, then these did. I heard the corpse I had shot, shouting, “What we gonna do with the human?”

The Gnome screamed: “Leave him! Maybe Ooze will forgive us if we...”

The voices were silenced; a whirlwind came through the hole and nothing else could be heard. If these intimidating monsters were so scared, I wondered how terrible Ooze must be? I tried to hide, realizing that the ghosts had all nearly all disappeared... then something red shot through the hole: Ludus!

He laughed, turned round in the air, enjoying being carried by the whirlwind.

“Well Cheez”, he grinned, “Wasn’t that a really professional show? Weren’t they in a real spin? Hohoho, haven’t had so much fun for ages!!!”

I stared... mouth wide open. Slowly he left the whirlwind, clicked his fingers and the library was spick and span. The big hole had disappeared. I couldn’t close my mouth!

“What’s the matter with you?”, Ludus asked. “Don’t you feel well?” I spluttered some gibberish, not believing what had happened.

“I...I th... I think.. I’m tired”

His sympathetic glance told me that I didn’t look to well. Slowly I made my way down the staircase, Ludus comfortably floated - of that I’m sure about - next to me noisily enjoying an old piece of chewing-gum.

“Do not worry, Cheez”, he said when we had almost reached the bedroom, “I will talk to them. They’re like children, you know? We don’t want intruders in Carfax Abbey, for human beings are almost always intruders, ’cause they want to force their will upon us. When I looked into your diaries yesterday I was really amazed. You seem different. You’ve got a sense of humour, you know. That’s the reason why I help you and why I will convince the others that you are a friend.”

I must have fallen asleep.

It’s now 3am. I just had to write all this down. It’s incredible. A strange silence has fallen over the house... like the calm before a storm...

August 22nd, 1982

Though things grew more bizarre with each day, at least I am sure now that I am not going mad.

I woke at 10 this morning, bleary eyed. I was immediately aware that I was not alone. All the monsters who only yesterday had tried to kill me were gathered at the foot of my bed. My heart began pounding again, and I feared for my life. Then Ludus came in and introduced the ghosts to me. There was Slime the rotten corpse who I had shot yesterday.

"Cheez, meet Slime. Slime, meet Cheez Burger", Ludus said grinning. Slime greeted me in a friendly way and seemed embarrassed.

"I'm sorry for what happened yesterday, but we couldn't...", he wiped some green fluid that had begun to ooze from his eye socket, with his torn and blood stained hand. Next to Slime stood Deaddy. He had once been the gravedigger of Carfax Abbey, Ludus told me, and obeyed an old curse: - every night he digs one grave and has to fill it up with soil the following night. It was a curse quite similar to the one Sisyphus had to bear and obviously Deaddy didn't enjoy it. Next in the queue was T-Bone. He was the skeleton who had waved to me when we met in the cemetery. He, too, apologized and gave me one of his ribs as a present.

"We both be blood brothers, but that is impossible...", he said.

"Never mind", I said quickly, regaining my composure, "we can be bone brothers from now on."

The fourth was Sir Lancelot, the knight. He was a sickly, tall looking creature with a simple pudding basin hair-cut. He held out his cold hand and bowed deeply. I noticed the gnome was missing and when I asked Ludus about him he said hesitantly: "Look, Foltair isn't really one of us, you know. He came a long time after us, at the time when Ooze settled here. He is one of Ooze's jackals - they now live here as well. Watch out for them because they will kill you if they ever get the chance."

That reminded me. Who was Ooze, what was Ooze and where was Ooze; I noticed Ludus' eyes narrow as I enquired. The jolly Ludus became somber.

"Ooze is evil. He is the master of evil. For years we lived in Carfax Abbey peacefully, together with some friends. One day though, there was a terrible storm in the world of the ghosts and Ooze emerged from nowhere. Ooze is not a ghost in the real sense, because he has never lived as a human being. But he lives of the human beings! His power is so enormous that none of us can contradict him. He brought some jackals who attend to us little house-ghosts and goblins - the damned - in order to keep us down and out of his way. He took over parts of this house, and we are not allowed to enter them. We have to be really careful, as Ooze has the ability to change his form at will."

There was an uneasy silence. I suggested that they fight Ooze, but straight away realised it was pointless. These spirits weren't easily scared. They were brave but they really were frightened.

"Ooze is much too powerful and his rage is cruel", Slime answered with a faltering voice, "Only 40 years ago we all witnessed how Ooze slaughtered my closest companion. Tom "Zom" Bee was silly 'nough to give Foltair a bit of his dope. He called the stuff Ghost-Dust... he found it somewhere in the depth of his own grave and mixed with a bit of rat's blood just for a laugh. But Foltair reported it to Ooze. Next we all had to watch Zom cast from the realms of the dead, cursed to stay 'nside his grave forever. Poor Zom", he sighed.

Slime told me much more about Ooze, but he had such a strong accent that I could only make out the story of Zom Bee. It must be a terrible punishment for ghosts not to be able to haunt any more, lying in a grave rotting away slowly. Apparently it is one of the worst tortures for a ghost.

Since then, I have been thinking about my new found... well, friends... and how I could perhaps try to free them from the tyranny of Ooze? After all, I am a living being and therefore surely not under his power.

The rest of the day was pretty normal. I tidied up and thought more about how to tackle Ooze.

Ludus appeared from time to time telling me the latest ghost-jokes. He's a really swell ... er, guy... and I really don't mind that that he found my diaries. I would never show them to just anybody. A diary is the most

personal thing a human has.

In the evening I lit a fire and prepared supper. Ludus was already in the kitchen wondering what I'd cook. He was delighted when I let him to try a steak and a sip of Guinness for the first time - it wasn't long before he was quite tipsy and tumbled through the hall.

August 25th, 1982

Peace seems to have actually invaded Carfax Abbey. The ghosts don't bother me anymore and when their noise woke me last night I just turned over and managed to get back to sleep.

I talked with several of my new friends today, and they helped me to arrange things in Carfax. Ludus was at my side most of the day - he seems very keen to know the jokes of the 20th century. And he takes great delight in experimenting with 20th century experiences. He seems most impressed by my old tobacco-pipe. I caught him floating in front of the fireplace, smoking away. He has also become hooked on beer. I met even more of the ghosts that reside in Carfax Abbey, although some of them don't want to have anything to do with me. Vino, the spirit of wine and the flying Holunder are among them. Well, they'll just have to get used to the thought of living under the same roof as a human! As long as they don't do me any harm I won't bother them. Horus, the spirit of age belongs to a second group of ghosts confined to one area of the Abbey. As Ludus explained, the other house-ghosts don't even know whether he's still alive (silly expression for ghosts I think), or whether he's already fallen victim to Ooze. He resides in one a part of the house strictly sealed off by Ooze. Marie EnToilet is another, she was banished to her area by her jealous husband, a great magician of the 14th century, because she couldn't get enough of the opposite sex, Ludus explained smiling. A third group are the Wandering Souls. Ludus told me that these were the souls of people who died or had died but their time hadn't come yet, and now have to wander about in a realm between realms.

So far I haven't any ideas how to free my friends from the tyranny of Ooze. Even Ludus who seems to know him best hasn't any ideas.

August 26th, 1982

Today saw an important breakthrough for me. With Ludus' help I managed to gain the respect of nearly all the ghosts in Carfax Abbey! They accept that unlike most humans, I won't try to drive them out, and that I am looking for peace and quiet as much as they are. Ludus even succeeded in persuading Vino and Holunder to talk with me.

Vino has the reddest nose I've ever seen and Holunder looks rugged like a sailor who had crossed the seven seas in a galley. I had heard of his bowling passion and jokingly thanked him for the compliment on my specially suited head. He must have been a portly fellow once.

Ludus told me over a glass of wine how the ghosts had come to Carfax Abbey and all in all it was a funny and entertaining afternoon. Vino listened with interest as I of my journey to Germany and we both fondly remembered all the different sorts of wine offered by that country - and, of course, Dr. Frankenstein. I gave Vino an old bottle of Rhine-wine as a gesture of peace and goodwill, to which he shouted joyfully, apologized, said good-bye and made quick exit clutching the bottle. I think I'm right in assuming that he went off to guzzle in private!

"Well then", Ludus said finally, "Let's propose a toast on eternal friendship".

That's what we did - although Holunder hesitated at first.

"You're all spoil-sports", he murmured. "Nobody thinks about me and my hobby." He still seemed a little upset that he wouldn't be able to use my head for bowling so I tried to think of something to cheer him up. One of my aunts had once given me a book called "Bowling - the right way". Like all aunts she also didn't know the real hobbies of her beloved nephew! I handed the book to Holunder who was quite surprised by the gesture; he lifted his eye patch, put on a dusty monocle and started to read the book. He smiled when he saw the ladies and gentlemen (especially the ladies) practicing their favourite sport.

"Cheez, laddy, would you please be so kind to invite the second lady on the right hand side to dinner this evening!", he said after a while.

When I turned round to Ludus again I noticed Lancelot had joined us at the table, and that both he and Ludus were looking very serious indeed. I asked Ludus if there was anything the matter. He stared long and hard at me before replying:

"We are very sad that barely have we become friends than we have to separate again, Cheez."

I didn't understand.

"Cheez!", Ludus implored. "You have to leave Carfax Abbey!"

I still didn't understand.

"Ooze! Oo-o-ze! When he comes to know that you are here it'll be terrible for us and especially for you. Something cruel is bound to happen. A human being in his sphere of influence.... he simply won't accept it!"

But dear Diary, you know this stubborn old fool better than that. I haven't been through all of the traumas of the last few weeks just to leave because of some old ghost.

I told Ludus that it was because I am human, that it can be an advantage. They looked at each other in surprise.

"Ooze doesn't know me, yet. He can't assess me and he might not know that I'm well informed about him. In addition I can fight him with... er, ...the classic weapons... you know, traditionally used for ghosts and demons... such as the cross, holy water and silver-bullets. Weapons a ghost cannot get hold of."

"Cheez, Cheez, come down to earth again!", Lancelot interrupted, "Ooze is no character in a novel. You must realise that anyone... or anything that confronts him can't afford any mistakes at all".

"But we have to do something! It may be the case that Ooze frightens you... but I don't fear him any more than I would... er,... a soap-bubble."

These were brave words, I knew, from such an old man. But I can't desert Carfax Abbey and my new friends. Perhaps friendship and love could be my strongest weapon against the evil force. Slowly Ludus began to smile again.

"Pass the ten pebbles over at once, Lance", and to me he said: "We made a bet on your reaction!" I was speechless.

"We want to defeat Ooze. You can help us. But we had to test you beforehand. Our existence depends on your loyalty!"

They left soon after, leaving me to my thoughts. I figured out

- I will attack Ooze only in daylight, if possible, for at night he is bound to have an advantage over me.

- I will look for items which I could use for tools or for weap...

I have just heard a screaming noise, and am going to investigate.

11:20pm. I am exhausted. But I must think quickly. Hopefully I have enough time to work out a plan. It might be that I will have to face Ooze tonight. It had been T-Bone's screams that I heard. I arrived in the hall together with Ludus and the other ghosts. The screams were coming from the cellar. As I began creeping down Ludus warned me to be careful.

I'm not too familiar with the cellar but it was fairly light down there - A big fire in a stone-chimney and several torches in dark holders on the stone wall - I saw a big copper kettle and... a rack! T-Bone was strapped onto it. Next to the rack stood Foltair. Suddenly Holunder was behind me, and whispered:

"Psst... Foltair is an evil creature and we must be very careful, but I think I know how we can save T-Bone."

He told me his plan. It was quite simple. I carefully went down the steep stairs until I was about halfway down. Then I started panting and scraping my feet as I ventured deeper. Of course Foltair heard the noises at once and spinning round drew his long leather whip from his belt. His eyes sparkled menacingly when he spotted me. The leather straps whistled and cracked through the air. Slowly the gnome walked towards me, his mouth slavering, showing his teeth that sparkled like razor-blades in the glow of the fire. I positioned myself in a dark corner so that Foltair's back faced the stairs. The whip flashed through the air again and twisted around my arm. A

terrible wave of pain went through my body and I tried to fight against the gnome who slowly drew me nearer. What strength in the arms of such a dwarf! Inch by inch we came nearer to each other. Then, with a sudden movement I managed to free myself. The weals from the whip hurt like hell.

Now Foltair drew a dagger and threw at me - I dodged, but just nicked my cheek. Foltair was encouraged when he saw the blood slowly dripping from the wound and... I swear he began to transform. His claws became longer and his face more and more distorted. He made a noise, the like of which I had never heard on earth. A strange smell, a smell of rotten flesh filled the air.

In the meanwhile, Holunder had floated behind Foltair and succeeded in freeing T-Bone. Just as Foltair was about to attack me, Holunder called him - the torturer turned around. T-Bone and Holunder now distracted him so I could flee. Breathing heavily I ran up the cellar stairs, closely followed by the other two, leaving the gnome at the foot of the stairs - staring behind us with that evil glow in his eyes.

In the hall the other ghosts cheered with joy. We moved to a safer room. T-Bone thanked us; "Thank you for the brave rescue, my friends. But this has convinced me that it'll be better for me to rattle my bones on another cemetery - far away from Ooze - whilst I am still free. Before I leave you, let me tell you this; Ooze knows everything. He is going to attack tomorrow night. Foltair told me everything - he didn't think I'd ever see you again. Tomorrow when the moon rises he will send out his most terrifying beasts to fetch Cheez. They plan to torture him and tear him into pieces so that he can't be identified. Take care of yourselves and especially of Cheez. I will miss you all my dear friends."

With a last rattle T-Bone disappeared. Poor creature I hope he'll find a peaceful place and new friends.

Ludus looked very unhappy.

"What are we to do now, Cheez?" he asked.

"We'll deal with Ooze together. Together we might succeed!", Holunder

said and took me in his fat arms.

We worked out a plan how we might destroy Ooze. The plan's quite simple but I hope it'll work.

I'm sitting here all alone and I'm scared to death... oh, I wish I hadn't written that. I don't think I'll be able to sleep now but I must try. May god be with us tomorrow!

That's where the diary ends. On the last page I found another entry in a stiff hand.

Cheez... we are so sorry...

You were the first human being who didn't want to send us away, who liked us. You were our friend.

You shouldn't have died like that. The only thing which can comfort us is the fact that we will now be friends for good.

Forgive us our weakness, that we couldn't help you.

Yours Ludus

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Yours Lohan