

HALLOWEEN SPIRITS

by Gary Peterson

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HALLOWEEN SPIRITS

A Comedy Play

by Gary Peterson

SYNOPSIS: Five classic monsters visit the haunted house of their friend, a dispirited ghost named Vincent. There they hold an intervention to try to revive his lost enthusiasm for Halloween. In a spoof of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", these five use their magic powers to conjure up three sets of mortals, hoping that these beings will frighten Vincent into returning to his former ghostly self.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 6 males, 3 either; 0-1 extra)

VINCENT (m)	Resident ghost of a haunted house. When he walks, he glides from place to place. He's depressed or dispirited through the play, only brightening near the end. <i>(36 lines)</i>
CHARLES (m).....	Human hunchback manservant. <i>(14 lines)</i>
BORIS (m).....	Frankenstein Monster. Stiff, often walks with his arms outreached. <i>(10 lines)</i>
BELA (m)	Vampire, very smooth and self-possessed. <i>(11 lines)</i>
ELSA (f)	A Banshee. She must be able to let loose as a fearfully loud wail is her calling card. <i>(13 lines)</i>
MARGARET (f)	A Witch. <i>(24 lines)</i>
CREIGHTON (m).....	Wolf-man, the comedian of the group. <i>(13 lines)</i>
MORTAL 1 (f).....	A bratty child, her obnoxious behavior shows through all the time. <i>(9 lines)</i>
MORTAL 2 (m/f)	Ghost hunter. <i>(3 lines)</i>

NOTE: The door and the floorboards tend to creak when they are used.

COSTUMES

VINCENT –Pale makeup and grey, musty clothing.

CHARLES –Black butler’s uniform, and be reminiscent of an undertaker.

BORIS – Green-faced, wears tattered ill-fitting clothing.

BELA –Old-world tuxedo with trappings, fake fangs, cape, with his hair slicked-back.

ELSA – Wild eyes and wilder hair.

MARGARET – Greenish makeup, long black dress and a pointed hat.

CREIGHTON – Should be made up to look as wolf-like as possible, with very ill-fitting, ragged clothing and hairy bare feet.

MORTAL 1 – Dressed up as zombie for Halloween.

MORTALS 2, 3, and 4 –Brown or grey jumpsuits.

MORTAL 5 – A gold jacket over her modern dress.

MAN and WOMAN – Modern attire.

PROPS

- ☐ Wand (Margaret)
- ☐ Trick-Or-Treat Bag (Mortal 1)
- ☐ Beeping and Buzzing Paraphernalia (Mortals 2, 3, and 4)
- ☐ Glowing Wand-Like Rods (Mortals 2, 3, and 4)
- ☐ Backpacks (Mortals 2, 3, and 4)
- ☐ Table (Set)
- ☐ Candlestick/Candelabrum (Set)
- ☐ Bowl with Coins (Set)
- ☐ Drapes (Set)

AT START: *Lights up, evening. We see the foyer of a typical haunted house. SFX: organ music. Cobwebs and candlesticks abound in this musty room. A small, dilapidated table is upstage, with a bowl and a dreary candelabrum upon it. SFX: doorbell rings insistently. CHARLES, the hunchbacked manservant of the mansion, enters from stage left and crosses the stage funereally to answer the door.*

CHARLES: *(Opening the door; he speaks like Alfred Hitchcock.)*
Good eeeeevening.

MARGARET: *(Enters carrying wand.)* Hello, Charles. Is Vincent at home?

BORIS, ELSA, BELA, and CREIGHTON enter shortly behind MARGARET.

CHARLES: The Master is up in the organ loft.

CREIGHTON: *(Midway through excitedly telling a joke to BELA.)* So—so anyway, get this – The third Vampire says, “I’m the designated flyer tonight, I better just drink plasma!”

BELA: *(Merely smiling.)* Oh, that is funny.

CREIGHTON: But wait, wait, wait! So the barmaid calls over and says, “Hey Louie! These vampires want two Bloods and a Blood Lite!”

BELA chuckles a bit, but CREIGHTON begins howling with lupine laughter at his own joke.

ELSA: *(To CREIGHTON.)* Now, boys, is this really a time for jokes?
This is supposed to be an intervention.

BORIS: We’re here to help Vincent.

ELSA: You know we’ve been told the poor ghost has lost all of his Halloween spirit!

CREIGHTON: *(Glumly.)* Sorry.

MARGARET: How is he, Charles?

CHARLES: *(With a head shake.)* The situation’s grave, I’m afraid.
The Master is a mere shadow of his former self.

MARGARET: Tsk! The poor dear!

CHARLES: No shrieking, no wailing, no ethereal emanations.

BELA: How's he haunting?

CHARLES: No spooking worth speaking. He simply won't haunt at all.

MARGARET: Not at all??

BORIS: That's not like the Vincent we know.

BELA: How he used to love to evoke screams of terror.

CREIGHTON: You could almost say he lived for it.

ALL look at CREIGHTON askance.

CREIGHTON: Almost.

CHARLES: Well, it was so good of you all to come.

ELSA: It was the least we could do.

MARGARET: We'll do what we can to cheer him up.

CHARLES: I doubt you'll be successful, however. The Master refuses to come down from his loft.

BORIS: I'm pretty sure he'll come down to see us. We're his best friends.

CHARLES: I don't think so. He's been up there all alone for nights.

ELSA: *(With a wicked smile.)* I'll call him down.

MARGARET: Oh, dear, not the screech.

ELSA: Desperate situations call for desperate measures, Margaret.

And you know we banshees can really wail when we want to.

MARGARET: *(Warningly.)* Cover your ears, everyone!

EVERYONE covers their ears. ELSA lets out a huge ululating wail, such as only a banshee can. SFX: organ music ceases as the house SFX: shakes and creaks with the shriek. There is a rumbling from upstairs.

CHARLES: I believe the Master has heard you, Elsa.

VINCENT enters descending the staircase looking disturbed.

VINCENT: What is that unearthly noise, Charles? *(Seeing everyone.)* Oh, Elsa, that was you. How nice to hear your voice. *(Gloomily.)* Hello, everyone.

ELSA: Vincent! How are you?

VINCENT: (*Sighs.*) Oh, I'm all right.

BELA: You look pale. I mean, more than usual.

MARGARET: Plus, you sound gloomy.

CREIGHTON: Yeah, and not in a good way.

VINCENT: I'm just feeling low.

BORIS: Come on, Vincent, cheer up! It's Halloween!

CREIGHTON: Our one night to howl! (*Howls.*) Ow, ow, oooooooooow!

MARGARET: What's the matter, Vincent?

VINCENT: I don't know. I just don't feel the old Halloween spirit any more. Do you remember when Halloween used to be just for us? You know – our night to howl, as Creighton so aptly puts it. Our chance to strike terror into the populace. Now it's like its amateur night.

ELSA: What do you mean?

VINCENT: Well, tonight, for example, if I went out for a good old haunt, I'd see ghosts that aren't really ghosts; zombies that don't stalk; mummies that unravel; witches with well-kempt hair and vampires that are asleep by ten! Who are these imposters?

BELA: (*Understanding.*) Oh, them!

MARGARET: They're children, Vincent.

VINCENT: Children? I thought they looked small.

MARGARET: They're the children of mortals; just pretending to be like us.

ELSA: They're really not trying to scare anyone.

VINCENT: Not trying to scare anyone? So what's the point?

BORIS: I think they're after pennies or candy or something.

CREIGHTON: Candy!

BELA: Don't they know what that stuff does to the fangs?

MARGARET: (*Smiling.*) I use some in my gingerbread house.

VINCENT: Don't you all understand? The thing is that these children are giving Halloween a good reputation! It's become like some fun celebration, not a night of terror and horror! No one really fears Halloween any more.

BORIS: Vincent's got a point. Time was, I'd trundle down the street with my arms raised like this (*He demonstrates.*) and all the villagers would flee.

ELSA: Now they throw treats at us.

CREIGHTON: Sometimes doggie biscuits.

VINCENT: Exactly. The loss of the proper, horrifying meaning of Halloween is depressing.

MARGARET: Yes, what you say does detract from the overall picture, but we ourselves can still keep true to the spirit of Halloween... Just haunt and frighten like usual.

VINCENT: (*Scoffs.*) Boo! Humbug!

ELSA: Halloween a humbug? Vincent!

VINCENT: I mean it. Look, guys and ghouls, I know you're all trying to help me, but it isn't any use. I'm sorry. And I just don't feel up to entertaining...

MARGARET: But—

VINCENT: Charles will see you out. I'm going back to the organ loft. I want to be alone. (*Slowly goes to the staircase.*)

MARGARET: We won't give up on you, Vincent!

BORIS: We're your friends!

VINCENT: (*Enters ascending the staircase.*) I appreciate your thoughts. (*To CHARLES.*) Charles, while I'm alone upstairs, don't disturb me for any reason.

CHARLES: Very good, sir. (*An afterthought.*) Sir, may I have today off?

VINCENT: Oh, is it after midnight?

MARGARET: Yes, Vincent, it's now officially Halloween. If only by a few minutes.

VINCENT: (*Glumly.*) I suppose it is a still a major holiday. OK, Charles, take the day off. Try to dig up your relatives and spend some time with them. But be here bright and early November 1st. (*Exits up the staircase.*)

ELSA: (*After VINCENT leaves.*) Poor Vincent!

BORIS: It's worse than I could have imagined.

BELA: Can't we do anything?

CREIGHTON: He's so dispirited! And that's not good for a ghost.

MARGARET: Hey, I have a novel idea!

BELA: Really?

MARGARET: Yeah, I got the idea out of a novel.

ELSA: What is it?

MARGARET: I'll cast a spell so that Vincent is visited by three mortals—

BORIS: Mortals!

CREIGHTON: Now, they really give me the shivers!

ELSA: (*Warningly.*) You never can tell what will happen when those beings get involved.

BELA: It's a bloodcurdling business, Margaret.

MARGARET: True, but just maybe they will frighten Vincent enough to return him to his old spectral self in time for Halloween night! (*To CHARLES.*) You'll be off work, so he'll have to confront these mortals all by himself, face-to-face.

CREIGHTON: (*Aside to BELA.*) That'd scare me out of a life or two.

BELA: (*Aside to CREIGHTON.*) Those mortals drive me batty.

CHARLES: (*Answering MARGARET.*) Very good, Madam. I will disappear at dawn.

MARGARET: Now, for the incantation: (*Waves her wand.*)

Harum scarum
Kublai Khan;
No one knows
The goings-on!
Spirits flee
As sunlight quickens;
Apologies go
To Charles Dickens!

SFX: rooster crows, and the light becomes less dim.

CREIGHTON: What, is it dawn already?

CHARLES: Then I'm history. (*Exits.*)

MARGARET: Summoning sunlight is just the first part of the spell. The mortals will arrive in three waves very shortly.

BELA: (*With a big yawn.*) Guys, I'm outta here. Dawn is my bedtime.

BORIS: Me too. I don't want to be around when those scary people arrive.

MARGARET: We're all leaving. Vincent has to face the mortals alone. We can return later to see how it all works out.

ALL exit, and lights up as sunlight floods in, indicating that day is coming. After a moment, SFX: doorbell rings. Pause. SFX: doorbell

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