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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Haunted House

Once upon a time, in a small, picturesque town, lived five young friends: brave Leon and curious Floyd, the two older boys; and Hazel, Phyllis, and little Effie, the sisters. They were known for their adventures and their unyielding spirits. One day, their adventurous spirits led them to the legendary haunted house on the edge of town, a place full of eerie stories and mysterious happenings.

As the friends arrived near the old, spooky mansion, they hesitated for a moment, their hearts pounding with excitement and a little fear. Leon, always the bold one, was first to break the silence. "What's the matter?" he asked, but before anyone could answer, he brushed it off, "No matter. We won't see anything anyway. Ghosts aren't real. It's just a Hallowe'en tale." But Hazel, always mindful of the town's lore, reminded him, "Every one in town knows that this ghost never appears to more than one at a time."

Before they ventured further, Hazel told the tale of the haunted house. She spun the tragic story of a French nobleman in exile, known as Marquis Smith, and his beautiful daughter, Elouise. Elouise fell in love with a young artist, Howell, but their love story ended in tragedy when her father discovered their plans to elope. In a flurry of disaster, Elouise and Howell lost

their lives, and the grief-stricken Marquis was driven to madness.

As the children's minds filled with this heartbreaking tale, their hearts pounded even louder. Leon, ever the brave, decided to approach the haunted house alone, only to sprint back, claiming he saw something white in one of the windows. Floyd followed, and he, too, returned rapidly, echoing Leon's claim. The children were stuck in a nervous anticipation, unsure of what to do next.

Just then, little Effie innocently wandered up to them, her tiny voice breaking the silence, "You seen my kitty?" she asked, her eyes wide and hopeful. The children had not, and they tried to steer her away from the haunted house, but she was insistent, "Boy saw her go this way," she said, and ran off calling, "Kitty, kitty!"



The children watched in horror as Effie bravely entered the haunted house, calling out for her lost cat.

Determined not to leave her alone, Leon and Floyd mustered up all their courage and ventured into the haunted house. After what felt like an eternity, they reappeared, a sigh of relief spreading through the group. But what was that Effie was carrying in her arms? It was her lost kitty, and it was white!

"We've found the ghost!" Leon exclaimed with a laugh, "it's just Effie's kitty!" Floyd agreed, "And of course, she sounded soft and patty, going down the stairs."

Effie, pleased at finding her kitty, decided to name her Elouise, after the beautiful maiden from the story. Leon, a little embarrassed but glad the mystery was solved, said, "No more haunted house hunting for me!," and Floyd agreed.

From that day on, whenever they saw Effie and her white cat, Elouise, they would chuckle and remember their adventurous night at the haunted house. And so, they learned not to let their imaginations run wild, and that not all ghosts are as they seem.

And with that, my dear ones, it's time for you to close your eyes and let the sandman guide you into the land of dreams. Good night!