

The Bijou Ghost

A Reading for Details Spooky Story

Little things mean a lot. That old saying is definitely true when you're reading! To be good reader, you have to pay attention to small **details**. The trick is figuring out which details are important to the story. Also, you have to understand how all the details hook together. Try it in this tale of a friendly ghost with an interesting hobby.

Once upon a time there was a young specter named Jasper. Jasper was a well-behaved phantom. He had a nice ghostly glow. He was good at haunting and spooking. And he really enjoyed moaning and groaning.

Jasper's one big problem was that he loved movies. And this brought him too close to human beings.

"Stay away from people," Jasper's mother always told him. "They're nothing but trouble."

For the most part, Jasper did stay away. He spent his time haunting a beautiful old movie theater named the Bijou.

For years, the Bijou was the most popular theater in town. The big old place had worn velvet seats, a giant screen, and an old-fashioned balcony. The popcorn was topped with real butter. But then the Multi-Plex 18 was built next door at the local mall. The Multi-Plex had bad popcorn and small screens. But it was new and it had a big parking lot. Everyone wanted to go there instead of the Bijou—well, everyone



but Jasper. Like many ghosts, he hated new buildings and refused to haunt them.

Before long, the Bijou was nearly empty most nights. Phyllis, the manager, started thinking about selling the theater to a dog-food company. It got so bad that one night

not a single person came to the 8 P.M. show. So, rather than hide up in the rafters, Jasper felt free to soar around in the drafty old theater and howl while he watched the movie.

“A-A-A-A-O-O-O-O!”

This was a big mistake.

Because what Jasper forgot was that Mike, the young projectionist, was still in the theater.

“What the—” Mike shrieked. “There’s a ghost up there!”

Jasper tried to hide, but he couldn’t avoid being seen by Phyllis, the manager, and Teresa, the popcorn lady. Before long, the police, newspaper reporters, TV cameras, and a whole host of gawkers had arrived to see the “Bijou Ghost.” In fact, the theater was almost full.

To avoid being seen again, Jasper had to shrink himself down into a very uncomfortable size and shape and hide until the movie ended. While he was hiding, Jasper couldn’t help overhearing people in the audience say such things as “What a beautiful theater!” and, “I just love this place!” and, “This is so much better than the Multi-Plex!”

This gave Jasper an idea. He was sad that the theater was losing customers. If it closed, he’d have nowhere to haunt. This could be his chance to do something about it! The following night, when no more than a dozen customers came to watch the movie, he waited until just the right moment, and suddenly let out a ghostly moan.

“A-ROOOO-O-O-O-O-O!!!!”

“Did you hear that?” people cried.

Within minutes, the police, newspapers, and cameras once again arrived. This time an even bigger crowd of gawkers came with them.

1. Jasper’s favorite thing in the world is

- ☐ A. ghosts.
- ☐ B. people.
- ☐ C. movies.
- ☐ D. popcorn.

2. What was the one thing that Jasper’s mother told him to stay away from?

- ☐ A. Ghosts
- ☐ B. People
- ☐ C. The movies
- ☐ D. Popcorn

3. The Bijou Theater is in danger of closing because

- ☐ A. the building is too dilapidated to repair.
- ☐ B. it is haunted.
- ☐ C. it sells popcorn with real butter.
- ☐ D. customers are going to the newer theater.

4. Why didn’t Jasper haunt the Multi-Plex?

- ☐ A. It was too far away.
- ☐ B. It did not have velvet seats.
- ☐ C. It was too new.
- ☐ D. It was too old.

“Where’s the ghost?” they all cried.

Jasper played it cool. To keep them all guessing, he stayed hidden until the movie was over. But now the word was out. The following night, a long line formed outside of the Bijou.

“What’s going on?” asked Mike.

“They’ve come to see the ghost,” said Phyllis.

It was true. The people had come to see Jasper. But by the time the show was half over, they were enjoying the movie so much that they’d forgotten about the ghost.



This pattern continued. At first, people came just to get a glimpse of the “Bijou Ghost.” But after they came once, they didn’t even care about the ghost anymore. They came for the theater. Before long, the Bijou was once again the most successful theater in the county. Simply put, it was the best place to watch a movie anywhere!

“I couldn’t agree more!” Jasper cried.

To this day, Jasper still stays up there, haunting the Bijou Theater. He hardly ever moans anymore or flies across the ceiling when people are around. But he does like to munch popcorn during the movie. So, if you’re sitting in the Bijou, you might hear a quiet crunching and feel a few kernels spilling down from above. That’s Jasper, the ghost, up in the rafters.

THE
END

5. Why did so many people come to the Bijou Theater?

- ☐ A. To see a movie
- ☐ B. Because the Multi-Plex was closed
- ☐ C. To see the ghost
- ☐ D. Because it was less expensive

6. What did many people notice when they came to the Bijou?

- ☐ A. That they really liked Jasper
- ☐ B. That they really liked the theater
- ☐ C. That they really liked the candy
- ☐ D. That the theater was dirty

7. How did Jasper help save the Bijou?

- ☐ A. He got the other ghosts to stop haunting it.
- ☐ B. He helped the owners fix it up.
- ☐ C. He held a fundraiser.
- ☐ D. He attracted customers to the theater.

8. You’re an author and you’re writing a guidebook to haunted places in the United States. Write a one-paragraph entry for the Bijou Theater, describing the ghostly goings-on that have been reported there.