



Where there's smoke there's fire.

# *Ghostly Residents*

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H R FRANCIS

Ghostly  
Residents

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Reader discretion is advised due to horror content.

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Poetry Based On  
The Ghosts Of  
The Lyceum Theatre  
Crewe

*Also by H R Francis*

NOVELLA

Train Of Thought

POETRY

Considered My Soul  
Horror Lines  
For The Love Of A Man

The Monk

The Lost Child

The Stagehand

The Forgotten Actor

The Ballerina Or Lady In White



*The Monk*

Emaciated fingers of a cadaverous hand  
Reach from beneath a cowl  
The scent of death, a spiritual man  
Locked forever, to prowl  
The darkest places, shadowed in sin  
Eternally on hallowed floor  
Never again, feel light within  
Holy footsteps of a time before

In a different time, this place  
Occupying the same space  
Trapped in remorse  
In a fall from grace  
Cursed to wander  
Never to rest  
Perpetual torment  
Never confess.

In darkened corner and shrouded eye  
He haunts beneath the stage  
With echoing groan and icy cry  
Suffering a bygone age  
He watches from a distant door  
You glance, but then he's gone  
Dissolved into the dark once more  
The faceless hooded one.

## *The Lost Child*

Ding dong, the bell doth chime  
    Calling us to dinnertime  
Washing hands and saying grace  
    Grateful for this happy place  
    To lay my head, until I'm dead!

With my soldier, without a care  
And my favourite button eye bear  
    I just want to play and play  
    In the garden, all the day  
But now he said that I am dead!

What is dead? A kind of dream?  
I think I remember that I screamed.  
Was that real, or just pretend?  
A game I played with my best friend?  
    Am I dead?

Mummy and Daddy left me here  
I cried, and then I dried my tears.  
They went to Heaven without me  
But, my time was soon to be  
I am dead!

Ding dong the bell doth chime  
Calling us to dinnertime  
Then I'll play forevermore  
In the garden I adore  
Because I'm dead.

## *The Stagehand*

Across darkened stage, atop creaking steps of wood  
A faded scrawl on bricks of old  
Told of pure, Theatric love.  
Where once would sit, above, in view  
Those who in times of nothing ado  
Rested and jested the times between.  
In awe of the great, thespian dream.  
A telling of one, who refused to leave.

A hand of the stage, of those hidden behind.  
A curtain swimmer with a soulful mind,  
For the art in his heart.

He may never, actually be revealed to the eye,  
For his happiness lies, not within the cries for more.  
Or, nor need of applause.  
For his heart, his cause, his pause, his love  
Is for the stage.  
Hence his hand was gained,

And thence remained,  
Forever.

A man of the sea, just passing through  
With time to kill, and what a sailor knew  
Put to good use.

With knot and noose, pulley and wheel,  
Once immersed, evermore to feel,  
How real the unreal.

A choice to stay, a decision was made.  
A home to build and a career bade,  
Farewell.

He learned and earned, and fell for the pull of the  
Theatre.

No more a drifter, nor traveller, but part creator and  
contributor

To the dream.

Footlights aglow, commencement of show after show.

Years melted years

Swallowed laughter and tears

Heart jerking fears  
Songs hark unto ears.

When perishment caught, a life was cut short.  
Maybe thirty plus two, still only the thought  
For the art in his heart.

He welcomed no light, but an eternal night  
For he refused to let his soul take flight  
He turned from the gates, he would never leave  
Couldn't let go of the place where he'd been the happiest.  
The only true home, the Theatrical throng.  
The only real place he had ever belonged.  
His place filled with passion, with drama and song  
And a family, with whom he would never be wronged.

So much time, a relative blur, did pass before his eyes.  
A job he loved, and continued to do, much to the surprise  
Of all future staff and technical crews  
Who ignored the whistles, the missing screws,  
The invisibly moved and misplacements, they knew

Were down to him, the mischievous unseen  
Part of the fixtures, the fittings, the team  
Still in love with the thespian dream.

So you just may, unbeknownst, one day  
From one faint, cornered eye, spy the guy  
With the art in his heart.

For in a high rise above a stage,  
On a brick wall  
Faintly remains  
The scrawlings of those  
From a time gone by,  
Committed to memory,  
No longer for eyes  
Just for Charlie.

## *The Forgotten Actor*

When he's there he makes it clear  
With the smell of smoke  
And the step of his heel.  
His presence is always distinctly felt  
With no mistaking the menacing dwell  
Silhouetted, in a shadowed niche,  
He watches you, in hopes to teach  
That you may be unwelcome  
And within the reach of  
The Actor.

No one knows of the actual fate  
That brought about the death,  
A rumour is all that lingers, still  
Of demise and last taken breath.  
The cause of a fire, of engulfing flames  
Ingrained in history,  
A cigarette left to carelessly burn?  
Or a deeper mystery?

Truth may never be revealed,  
Of that long forgotten even'  
What secrets were buried deep beneath?  
What sins 'fore the eyes of Heaven?  
Why the menace?  
Why threat and disdain  
Seep from presence mere?  
What reason for his anger?  
Regret?  
Or malice sheer?

So with his name unrevealed  
And memory long burned,  
His cost has all but been forgotten,  
His lessons yet be learned.  
He comes to make sure  
Well, it's known,  
That we are visitors within his home,  
His eternal home, never to leave.  
No moving on, no reprieve for  
The Actor.

What was his crime?  
What locked him in  
His palace of the arts?  
Forever, questions stitched within  
The beautifully carved,  
Painted plaster elegance  
That crowns and sits above.  
That rests atop the audience  
To absorb, but not absolve  
Where the sinner and the saint  
All equally are viewed  
Distinguish 'tween the two, unmeasured.  
Equality assumed  
None can hide their truth from heart,  
Known - is deep within  
As we are truly  
Judge and jury  
Presiding o'er our sin.  
Is this the reason for the reside  
Of our hostile, thespian threat?  
Did, his actions long ago

Sentence for his debt?  
To be, always and forever stained  
With the now - historical blame,  
And to carry the shame  
And forever  
Be named  
The Forgotten Actor.

## *The Ballerina*

She brings with her the breath of cold  
The scent of lavender bloom  
Oblivious to your company  
She traverses the room.

Melancholic music  
Deep within one mind  
Silent pirouetting  
Lost way back in time.

Nothing of recognition  
Nor understanding of your presence  
Her teardrops like ice diamonds  
The beauty of her essence.

She should have been an angel  
But circumstances skewed  
Driving her sweet, beautiful soul  
By the hand of a devilish muse.

Locked now in forever  
All too much to bear  
The taking of her own life  
Was a release for her, from care.

So, just as she once was  
And as she'll always be  
Her life was overburdened  
But in the dance she's free.

The beautiful Ballerina  
Gracious Lady in White  
Be honoured if you see her  
In her endless dance of night.

## Acknowledgements

Ghostly encounters experienced by patrons and staff previously documented online and in any related articles.

All staff, past and present, and their stories of the resident ghosts.

My personal experiences with the Ghosts of The Lyceum.

Information on the Ghosts in the Lyceum Centenary Brochure.

**March 11<sup>th</sup> 1910**

A fire broke out in a dressing room and burnt down a Theatre.

What could have happened that night to cause such a disaster?

Who are the ghostly residents that dwell within and how did they get there?

A young local woman with an eye for a mystery sets out to write a story and uncovers some unexpected truths.

Is it time for the story to be told, or should it stay forever buried?

THE RESIDENTS

by

H R Francis

Coming soon.

