

The Haunted House

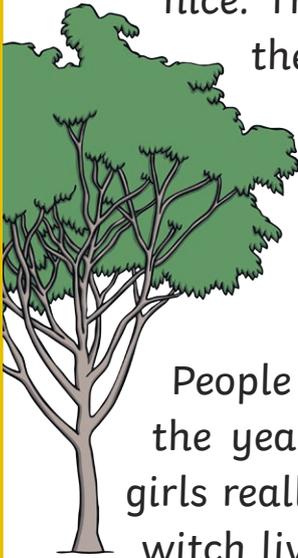
Jessica and Freya were taking Monty for a walk after school. Freya was holding his bright red lead. They walked down to the park. They stopped to play on the slide. After ten minutes, they threw Monty's ball for a while. Mr Chen shouted hello at them from the other side of the park as they played and they waved back.



"Time to go home," said Jessica.

"Oh, you're right," said Freya, and they set off for home.

As they walked down the road, they stopped to cross. They looked both ways and quickly went to the other side. They always crossed by the big tree because if they didn't, they had to walk near to Dark House. Even the name was scary. The weather was really nice. The sun was hot and bright, but when you looked at the house, you felt cold.



The house was big and had lots of windows with thick curtains so you couldn't see inside. The garden was full of big trees with lots of leaves. You could not see the house very well.

People told scary stories about Dark House. Some boys in the year above them at school said it had ghosts and the girls really didn't like ghosts! Freya's grandad told her that a witch lived there, casting spells all day long.

1. What colour was Monty's lead?

2. Who waved at Jessica and Freya?

3. Who told Freya that a witch lived in Dark House?

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As the girls looked at the house, a squirrel came down and ran towards Dark House and Monty was off. He ran away very quickly, pulling his lead out of Jessica's hand and jumping into the garden of Dark House.



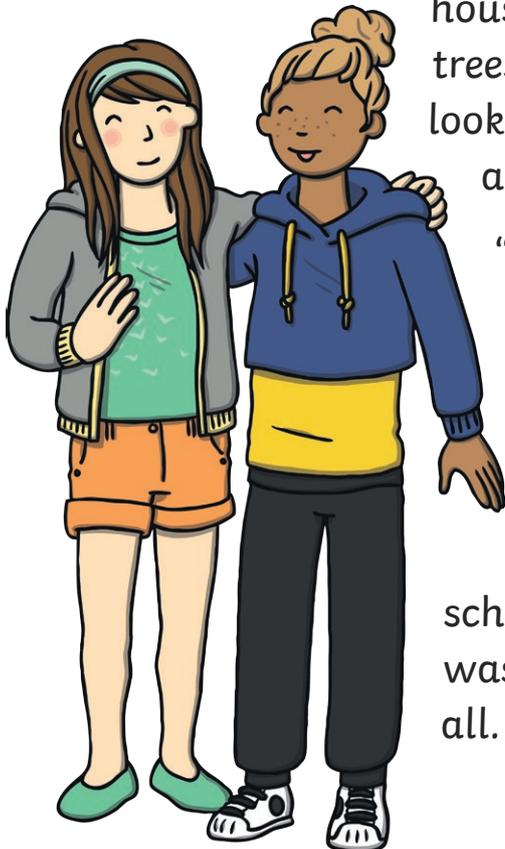
"What do we do?" shouted Freya.

"We don't have a choice," whispered Jessica, "we have to go and get him."

They crossed the road, and carefully opened the gate of Dark House. It gave a loud creak, which made them both jump.

They walked quietly down the path, calling out for Monty but he didn't come. They didn't want the ghosts to hear them. They didn't want to be there. They just wanted to get Monty and get out as quickly as they could.

They noticed something...the closer they got, the more normal the house looked. When it wasn't covered by the trees, it didn't look like a haunted house. It looked the same as all the others in the street and you could smell yummy food cooking.



"Are you missing someone?" said a kind voice.

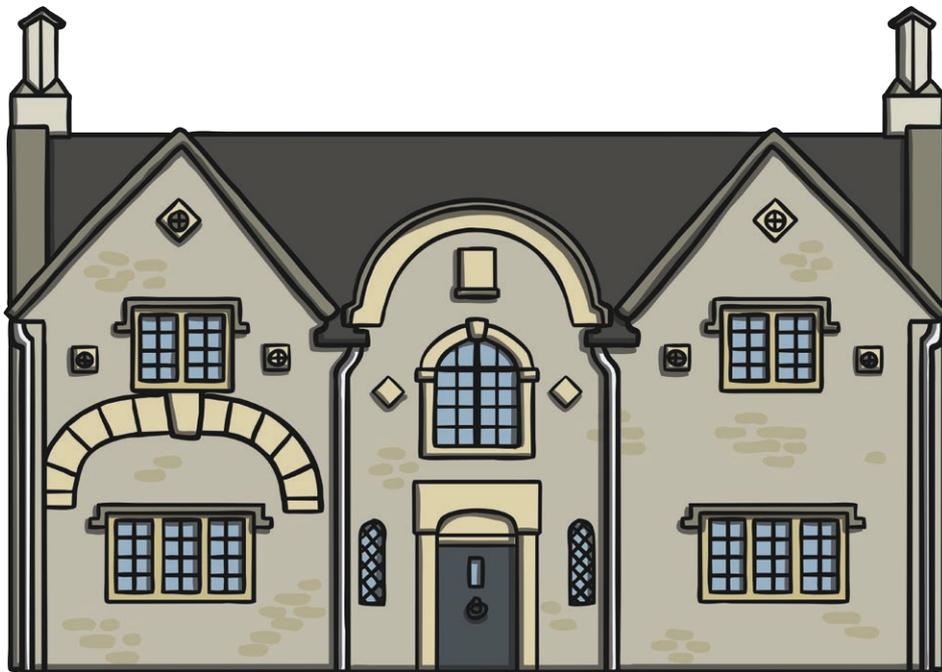
Monty was being stroked by a smiling old lady sat in a comfy chair in the garden. Her name was Mrs Francis and she used to teach at Jessica and Freya's school. Dark House wasn't haunted and wasn't anything to be worried about after all.

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4. What did Monty chase?

5. What did the girls wish as they walked down the path?

6. What do you think will happen next in the story?



The Haunted House **Answers**

1. What colour was Monty's lead?

Monty's lead was bright red.

2. Who waved at Jessica and Freya?

Mr. Chen waved at Jessica and Freya.

3. Who told Freya that a witch lived in Dark House?

Her grandad told her that a witch lived in Dark House.

4. What did Monty chase?

Monty chased a squirrel.

5. What did the girls wish as they walked down the path?

The girls wished to get Monty and get out as quickly as they could.

6. What do you think will happen next in the story?

Varied answers.

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Jessica and Freya were taking Monty for a walk after school like they always did. Jessica holding his bright blue lead in her left hand. They walked down to the park. They stopped for a quick play on the swings and then kept going. Mrs Hamid shouted hello at them from the other side of the road as they walked and they waved back.



“Time to cross over,” said Jessica quickly.

“Oh, you’re right,” replied Freya, as they looked both ways and quickly went to the other side. They always crossed by the oak tree because if they didn’t, they had to walk near to Dark House. Even the name was scary. The weather was lovely. The sun was shining, the wind blew gently but when you looked at the house, you felt suddenly cold.

It was bigger than all of the other houses around and darker. Even though it was sunny, the windows were dark, and you couldn’t see inside. Trees grew across the path, blocking the view of the house, making it difficult to see.



People told all sorts of stories about Dark House. Some of the boys in the year above them at school said that it was haunted but the girls were sure they had never been anywhere close to the house itself. Freya’s grandad told her that a wicked witch lived there, cooking up potions all day long, but he had also told her that a dragon lived in her tree house!

As the girls stared at the house behind the trees, a squirrel jumped down and ran away towards Dark House and Monty was off. He ran so quickly, he pulled his lead

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out of Jessica's hand and disappeared into the garden of Dark House, chasing after the squirrel.

"What do we do?" shouted Freya in panic.

"We don't have a choice," whispered Jessica, "we have to go and get him."



They crossed the road, and carefully opened the gate at the end of the driveway of Dark House. It gave a loud, sharp creak, which made them both jump in shock. Then it shut loudly behind them.

Nervously, they tiptoed down the path, calling out for Monty, but he didn't come. They didn't want to be there. They just wanted to get Monty and get out as quickly as they could.

A strange thing happened...the closer they got, the more normal the house looked. When it wasn't covered by the trees, the house wasn't dark but quite light. The bricks were the same as all the others in the street and you could smell a lovely cake cooking somewhere inside. Definitely not a horrible witch's potion.



"Are you missing someone?" said a kind voice.

Monty was being stroked by a smiling old lady in the doorway who introduced herself as Mrs Walker. She used to teach at Jessica and Freya's school. Dark House really wasn't anything to be worried about after all.

The Haunted House Questions

1. Who shouted 'Hello!' to the girls as they walked Monty?

2. Why did the girls cross the road?

3. How do you think the girls felt as they walked by Dark House?

4. Which 2 things made the girls feel better when they saw Mrs. Walker?

5. What did the girls do down the path to not be noticed?

6. Why didn't Freya believe her grandad?

7. What 2 things did they notice about Dark House when they got nearer that made it less scary?

8. What is the moral of the story? Explain your answer.

The Haunted House **Answers**

1. Who shouted 'Hello!' to the girls as they walked Monty?

Mrs. Hamid shouted 'Hello!' to the girls.

2. Why did the girls cross the road?

The girls crossed the road so they didn't need to walk near Dark House.

3. How do you think the girls felt as they walked by Dark House?

The girls probably felt scared / terrified because of the stories they had been told.

4. What 2 things made the girls feel better when they saw Mrs. Walker?

- **The writer uses the phrase 'said a kind voice'.**
- **Monty was being stroked by a 'smiling, old lady'.**

5. What did the girls do down the path to not be noticed?

The girls tiptoed down the path so they weren't noticed.

6. Why didn't Freya believe her grandad?

Freya's grandad had also told her that a dragon lived in her tree house.

7. What 2 things did they notice about Dark House when they got nearer that made it less scary?

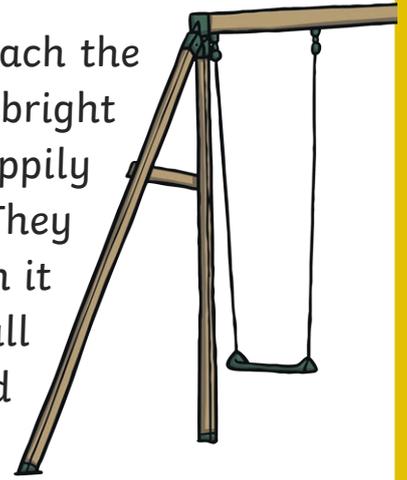
- **The house was light not dark.**
- **The bricks were the same as all of the houses on the street.**
- **There was a lovely smell of cake cooking.**

8. What is the moral of the story? Explain your answer.

Varied answers.

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Monty tugged hard on his lead, desperate to reach the playing field. Jessica was holding tightly to his bright blue lead with her left hand. They walked happily down to the park, enjoying the sunshine. They stopped for a quick play on the swings and then it was time to focus on Monty. They threw his ball for a good half hour before he was panting hard and ready for a break. His tongue was hanging out of his mouth and he rapidly lapped up the water Jessica had brought. Mrs Hamid shouted hello to them from the other side of the park as they played and they waved back a greeting. Once Monty had finished his water, they headed for home. They walked the normal route; past the shops, down the side of the canal and onto Findle Street.



“Time to cross over,” said Jessica quickly.

“Oh, you’re right,” replied Freya, as they looked both ways sharply and quickly went to the other side. They always crossed by the ancient oak tree because if they didn’t, they would be forced to walk near to Dark House. Even the name was enough to make you shudder. The weather was perfect. The sun was shining, the wind blew gently but when you looked at the house, you felt a sudden chill run down your back.



It was bigger than all of the other houses around and darker. It seemed like a dark cloud blocking the sun on a summer’s day. Even though it was bright, the light didn’t seem to reach Dark House. It sat in shadow. You couldn’t see inside; you could only imagine what lived there. On more

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than one occasion, Jessica and Freya thought they had seen the curtains move, or lights flicker, but when they looked again, all was silent and still. Vast trees spread across the path, blocking the view of the house, making it difficult to see anything clearly from the roadside.

People told all sorts of stories about Dark House. Some of the boys in the year above them at school said that they had heard moans coming from inside, but what do boys know! The girls were sure they never dared go anywhere near it. Freya's grandad told her that a powerful conjurer once lived there, creating twisted potions and spells, but he had also told her that a troll had once taken over their downstairs toilet, so he wasn't the most trustworthy person. One thing was certain, they didn't want to find out if any of the stories were true; they just wanted to get home.



As the girls stared at the shadowy shape behind the trees, a lively squirrel jumped down and sprinted away towards Dark House and Monty was off like a rocket. He ran so quickly, he yanked his lead out of Jessica's hand and flew across the road. A speeding car was forced to stamp on its brakes to avoid hitting him and honked its honk loudly in disgust. The last thing the girls saw was Monty's tail disappearing into the forbidding garden of Dark House.

"What do we do?" shouted Freya in panic.

"We don't have a choice," whispered Jessica, "we have to go and get him."

They crossed the road carefully, and quickly opened the gate at the end of the driveway of Dark House. It gave a piercing creak, which made



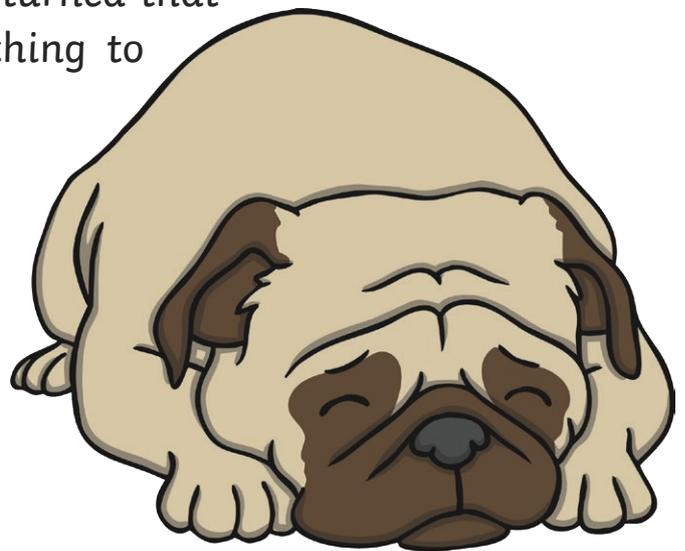
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them both leap in shock. Then it slammed sharply behind them. Nervously, their hearts pounding, they tiptoed down the loose gravel path, calling out for Monty, but there was no sign of him. They didn't want to be there. They just wanted to get Monty and escape this horrid place.

They noticed something peculiar...the closer they got, the more normal the house appeared. When it wasn't obscured by the trees, the house was quite lovely. All of the shadows were gone and the details were obvious to the girls. There were beautiful flowers embroidered on the curtains draped in the windows, blossoms that hung around the doorway and clean, fresh paint on the windowsills. Not only was the look of the house completely different, the smells were wonderful. The flowers, the fresh cut grass and the scent of baking drifted out of what must be the kitchen window.

"Are you missing someone?" came a kind voice from their left.

Monty lay happily, being stroked by a gentle old lady, perched in an armchair. She sat at a table with a fresh pot of tea and some delicious looking biscuits. She introduced herself as Mrs Salas and it turns out she used to teach at Jessica and Freya's school. When they thought about it, it turned that Dark House really wasn't anything to be worried about after all.



The Haunted House Questions

1. How did the girls know that Monty needed a break?

2. On which street was Dark House?

3. What did the girls think they had seen in the house?

4. Why does Freya not trust what her grandad says?

5. When Monty chased the squirrel it says he was... Finish the sentence.

6. How do you know the girls were nervous walking down the path?

7. Name two things that make Dark House seem a pleasant place to be.

8. What is the moral of the story? Explain your answer.

The Haunted House **Answers**

1. How did the girls know that Monty needed a break?

Monty's tongue was hanging out of his mouth as he needed a break.

2. On which street was Dark house?

Dark House is on Findle street.

3. What did the girls think they had seen in the house?

The girls thought they saw the curtains move and the lights flicker.

4. Why does Freya not trust what her grandad says?

Freya's grandad once told her a troll had taken over the downstairs loo.

5. When Monty chased the squirrel it says he was... Finish the sentence.

When Monty chased the squirrel he was 'off like a rocket.'

6. How do you know the girls were nervous walking down the path?

The girls tiptoed down the path and their hearts were pounding.

7. Name two things that make Dark House seem a pleasant place to be.

- **There were flowers sewn on the curtains.**
- **There were flowers around the door.**
- **There was nice fresh paint on the house.**
- **The grass was freshly cut.**
- **Fresh biscuits and tea available.**
- **Friendly lady**

8. What is the moral of the story? Explain your answer.

Answers involving don't believe rumours / don't judge a book by its cover.