

THE SKELETON AND THE GREMLINS



By Linda Asato

The Gremlins' Mischief

On the edge of Hollow Hill, under the golden Halloween moon, three mischievous gremlins—Grub, Snip, and Tizzle—scampered through the pumpkin patch giggling.

“Let’s tie the scarecrow’s hat to the black cat’s tail!” cackled Grub.

“Or hide all the candy!” squeaked Snip.

Tizzle grinned, his sharp teeth glinting. “Better yet, let’s make the ghosts sneeze dust!”

Off they went, leaving a trail of overturned pumpkins and scattered candy corn.



Meeting Mr. Bones

As they darted past the old stone gate, something rattled in the shadows.

Rattle, clack, click.

A tall skeleton stepped into the moonlight, his bones gleaming white as candle wax. He wore a crooked top hat and carried a lantern that glowed softly yellow.

“Good evening, my little gremlins,” said the skeleton in a voice smooth as wind through dry leaves. “Out to cause mischief again, are you?”

The gremlins froze.

“Who—who are you?” asked Snip.



“My name is Mr. Bones, caretaker of Hollow Hill,” he said with a grin. “I make sure the spirits rest easy and the pumpkins stay bright.”

The Lantern of Light

Grub puffed out his chest. “We don’t rest easy! We cause fun!”

“Fun for you, maybe,” Mr. Bones chuckled. “But not for everyone else.”

He lifted his lantern. Inside, tiny golden motes of light swirled.
“See these? They’re good deeds—tiny bits of kindness that glow brighter than any candle.”

The gremlins peered inside, amazed.

“Where do you get them?” Tizzle asked.

“From helping others,” said Mr. Bones. “Each kind act gives off a sparkle. I collect them to keep Hollow Hill shining.”



Trouble in the Night

But the gremlins weren't sure what to think. They liked glowing things... but helping? That didn't sound very interesting. In fact it sounded boring.

So they scampered off and did every naughty trick they could think of. They tore out the witches' broom bristles, made the black cats chase their own tails, and tangled the ghosts' sheets.

The more they laughed, the darker the hill seemed to grow.

The moon hid behind clouds. The jack-o'-lanterns dimmed to a faint flicker.

"Where'd the light go?" Snip whispered.

"It's all your mischief," came a hollow voice.



Mr. Bones appeared again, his lantern now dim. "When there's too much trouble, the glow fades away. Hollow Hill needs light, not gloom."

A Chance to Make It Right

Grub frowned. “We didn’t mean to make it dark.”

“Then perhaps you can make it bright again,” said Mr. Bones.

He handed each gremlin a tiny glowing orb.

“Try doing something good. You’ll know when it works.”

First, they untangled the ghosts’ sheets. The ghosts twirled happily. Next, they fixed the witches’ broom bristles. The witches zoomed away cackling.

Then they returned all the candy to the doorsteps.



The Hill Shines Again

As they worked, their glowing orbs shimmered brighter and brighter. The ghosts glowed silvery white, the witches' hats sparkled with gold

buckles, and the pumpkins burst into light once more.

The moon peeked from behind the clouds, smiling. Even the bats glittered like bits of starlight.

The gremlins' orbs floated up into Mr. Bones's lantern, swirling together until the whole hill gleamed.

"Well done!" said Mr. Bones, tipping his hat. "You've made Hollow Hill shine again."



A New Kind of Fun

Grub kicked a pebble, embarrassed but proud. “We didn’t know helping could be so fun,” he said.

Snip nodded. “And it makes everything glow!”

Tizzle laughed. “Maybe we’ll help and play tricks—but only the funny kind!”

Mr. Bones chuckled. “That’s the spirit. Mischief’s fine—when it brings smiles, not frowns.”

From that night on, the gremlins became Hollow Hill’s helpers—fixing fences, lighting pumpkins, and keeping the Halloween magic alive.

If you walk through Hollow Hill on a cool October night, you might see a faint blue glow lighting your path.

And you’ll know the gremlins are still out there—doing good, one sparkle at a time.



The End