

## The Graveyard Book Text Guide

### Character List

**“Bod” (Nobody Owens):** The protagonist of the story. A young boy who is “adopted” by the ghosts in the graveyard. He is granted the Freedom of the Graveyard.

**Silas:** Bod’s guardian. Acts as Bod’s teacher and protector. He is neither alive nor dead.

**Liza Hempstock:** Bod’s ghost friend who was killed for witchcraft. She lives outside the graveyard.

**Mr. and Mrs. Owens:** Bod’s caring parental figures who happen to be ghosts.

**Scarlett Amber Perkins:** A young girl who becomes friends with Bod, but she moves to Scotland. She believes that Bod is imaginary. The two later reunite and continue their adventure.

**Miss Lupescu:** Becomes Bod’s guardian while Silas is away. She teaches Bod many important lessons that are essential for his survival. She considers herself a Hound of God.

**“The man” Jack Frost:** The antagonist of the story. He killed Bod’s family and is continually searching for Bod.

### Themes with quotes

#### **Supernatural:**

- “They knew her, the graveyard folk, for each of us encounters the Lady on the Grey at the end of our days, and there is no forgetting her” (19)
- “While you are here, you can see in the darkness. You can walk some of the ways that the living should not travel. The eyes of the living will slip from you. I too was given the Freedom of the Graveyard” (21)
- “There’s rules for those in the graveyards, but not for those as was buried in unhallowed ground. Nobody tells *me* what to do, or where to go” (71)
- “Just gived you a helping hand...I may be dead, but I’m a dead witch, remember. And we don’t forget” (74)
- “Because there are mysteries. Because there are things that people are forbidden to speak about. Because there are things they do not remember” (92)
- “His presence was almost ghostly” (100)
- “He was becoming a presence, rather than an absence, and that made him uncomfortable” (106)

- “The room was empty and unsettling in its emptiness, and Mo felt as if she were not alone, as if she were being watched” (115)
- “Have you ever been haunted, Maureen Quilling? Ever looked in the mirror wondering if the eyes looking back at you were yours? Ever sat in an empty room, and realized you were not alone? It’s not pleasant” (116)
- “The inside of the chapel was dark, and Bod found himself squinting as he tried to see...I can’t see anything...It’s too dark” (166)
- “But instead of his head slipping through the solid matter like a shadow passing through a deeper shadow, his head met the ground with a hard and painful thump” (163)
- “there would be a child born who would walk the borderland between the living and the dead. That if this child grew to adulthood it would mean the end of our order and all we stand for” (149)
- “He was Nobody Owens, he told himself. He was a part of the graveyard. He would be fine” (146)
- “And then, like smoke, Bod slipped through the bars” (144)
- “He reached the bottom of the steps and waited for the Sleer to manifest. And he waited, and waited, by nothing appeared, nothing whispered, nothing moved. He looked around the chamber, untroubled by the deep darkness, seeing it as the dead see” (137)

#### Death vs. Living:

- “He couldn’t push the minds of the dead as he could the living, but he could use all the tools of flattery and persuasion he possessed, for the dead are not immune to either” (15)
- “They were watching the Lady on the Grey, each of them half-excited, half-scared. The dead are not superstitious, not as a rule, but they watched her as a Roman Augur might have watched the sacred crows circle, seeking wisdom, seeking a clue” (19)
- “The dead should have charity” (19)
- “It’s like the people who believe they’ll be happy if they go and live somewhere else, but who learn it doesn’t work that way. Wherever you go, you take yourself with you. If you see what I mean” (58)
- “Things blossom in their time. They bud and bloom, blossom and fade. Everything in its time” (81)
- “He was cold, true, but the cold did not bother Bod, not really: the graveyard embraced him, and the dead do not mind the cold” (82)
- “I do not know what it is like to dance the Macabray. You must be alive or you must be dead to dance it – and I am neither” (83)
- “There were people trickling into the square, in ones and twos, in families or alone. He had never seen so many living people at one time. There must have been hundreds of them, all of them breathing, each of them alive as he was, each with a white flower” (87)
- “They took hands, the living with the dead, and they began to dance” (88)
- “the Macabray, the dance of the living and the dead, the dance with Death” (89)

- “The dead and the living do not mingle, boy. We are no longer part of their world; they are no part of ours. If it happened that we danced the danse macabre with them, the dance of death, then we would not speak of it, and we certainly would not speak of it to the living” (91)
- “You know you’re different. That you are alive. That we took you in—they took you in here – and that I agreed to be your guardian” (98)
- “You’re *alive*, Bod. That means you have infinite potential. You can do anything, make anything, dream anything. If you change the world, the world will change. Potential. Once you’re dead, it’s gone. Over. You’ve made what you’ve made, dreamed your dream, written your name. You may be buried here, you may even walk. But that potential is finished” (98)
- “It’s not just the learning stuff. It’s the other stuff. Do you know how nice it is to be in a room filled with people and for all of them to be breathing?” (107)
- “But between now and then, there was Life; and Bod walked into it with his eyes and his heart wide open” (170)
- “Truly, life is wasted on the living, Nobody Owens. For one of us is too foolish to live, and it is not I. Say you will miss me” (165)

#### Community/Family:

- “the Owensens were respectable and respected. *That Silas had volunteered to be the boy’s guardian had weight – Silas was regarded with a certain wary awe by the graveyard folk, existing as he did on the borderland between their world and the world they had left*” (18)
- “A graveyard is not normally a democracy, and yet death is the great democracy, and each of the dead had a voice, and an opinion as to whether the living child should be allowed to stay, and they were each determined to be heard, that night” (18)
- “The great dog-like head lowered towards him, and for one made, fear-filled moment, he thought she was going to take a bite out of him, but her tongue licked the side of his face, affectionately” (54)
- “The two of them shared the chips, and once or twice, Miss Lupescu even smiled” (56)
- “It’s okay. Miss Lupescu looked after me. I was never in any danger” (56)
- “While Bod was prepared to justify himself to Master and Mistress Owens, he was not about to explain himself to Silas; the very thought of those dark eyes angry, or worse still, disappointed, filled him with shame” (66)
- “Behind him, a cool green shade, overgrown with trees and ivy: home” (67)
- “Mr. Owens had, regretfully, that night, done what he saw as his duty, and Bod’s bottom stung like anything. Still, the look of worry on Mrs. Owen’s face had hurt Bod worse than any beating could have done” (79)
- “The shoelaces gave him a little trouble and Silas had to teach him how to tie them. It seemed remarkably complicated to Bod, and he had to tie and re-tie his laces several times before he had done it to Silas’s satisfaction” (83)

- “He wanted to embrace his guardian, to hold him and tell him that he would never desert him, but the action was unthinkable. He could no more hug Silas than he could hold a moonbeam, not because his guardian was insubstantial, but because it would be wrong. There were people you could hug, and then there was Silas” (83)
- “Everywhere he went he saw people wearing the white flowers...not everyone took a flower, but most people did” (86)
- “It was a tradition in the Old Town...before the city grew up around it. When the winter flowers bloom in the graveyard on the hill they are cute and given out to everybody, man or woman, young or old, rich or poor” (86)
- “He saw the living dancing with the dead. And the one-on-one dances became long lines of people stepping together in unison, walking and kicking...a line dance that had been ancient a thousand years before” (89)
- “At the best of times his face was unreadable. Now his face was a book written in a language long forgotten, in an alphabet unimagined. Silas wrapped the shadows around him like a blanket, and stared after the way the boy had gone, and did not move to follow” (108)
- “Him as killed your family. Us in the graveyard, we wants you to stay alive. We wants you to surprise us and disappoint us and impress us and amaze us. Come home, Bod” (110)
- “Silas was sprawled on his back, on the ground, where the car had knocked him. He was deathly still” (113)
- “It was an honor to be your guardian, young man” (167)
- “Misstress Owens and I have spent our lives wishing that we had a child. I do not believe that we could have ever had a better young man than you, Bod” (164)
- “This is my home...I’m going to protect it” (146)

#### Good vs. Evil:

- “The man Jack’s eyes were accustomed to the dim moonlight, so he had no desire to turn on an electric light. And light was not that important, after all. He had other skills” (6)
- “His knife was in his pocket, safe and dry inside its sheath, protected from the misery of the elements” (20)
- “You had parents. An older sister. They were killed. I believe that you were to have been killed as well, and that you were not due to chance, and the intervention of the Owenses” (98)
- “You’re missing the point, I’m afraid. You two need to stop this. Stop behaving like other people don’t matter. Stop hurting people” (103)
- “Bod felt something stab in the back of his hand. He did not cry out. He just looked up. Nick Farthing grinned down at him, a sharpened pencil in his fist. ‘I’m not afraid of you,’

whispered Nick Farthing. Bod looked at the back of his hand. A small drop of blood welled up where the point of the pencil had punctured it” (106)

- “I...am Nobody. And you need to change. Turn over a new leaf. Reform. All that. Or things will get very bad for you” (108)
- “Bod heard the scream, a shout of terror, and felt the satisfaction of a job well done” (109)
- “You aren’t a person. People don’t behave like you. You’re as bad as he was. You’re a monster” (158)
- “He was smiling now, in the darkness. Bod could see it on his face: a strange, delighted smile that seemed out of place on that face, a smile of discovery and of understanding” (155)

### Fear vs. Bravery:

- “There was moonlight, and there were streetlights, but the fog stifled everything, muted light and muffled sound and made the night shadowy and treacherous” (6)
- “He was surprised when he hit the floor, but he did not cry out: if you cried they came and put you back in your crib” (6)
- “the Indigo Man threw back his head and let out a series of yodeling screams, a full-throated ululation that made Scarlett grip Bod’s hand so tightly that her fingernails pressed into his flesh. Bod was no longer scared, though” (31)
- “Scarlett said to Bod, ‘You’re brave. You are the bravest person I know, and you are my friend. I don’t care if you *are* imaginary” (35)
- “He could feel the Sleer winding its waves of fear around him, like the tendrils or some carnivorous plant. He was beginning to feel cold, and slow, as if he had been bitten in the heart by some arctic viper and it was starting to pump its icy venom through his body” (65)
- “He was eight years old, and the world beyond the graveyard held no terrors for him” (66)
- “He felt stupid for having been lured inside, foolish for not trusting his first impulses, to get as far away from the sour-faced man as possible. He had broken all the rules of the graveyard, and everything had gone wrong...He could feel himself beginning to panic, and he suppressed it, pushing the worry back down inside him” (70)
- “Panic started then, a low-level panic. It was the first time in his ten years that Bod could remember feeling abandoned in the place he had always thought of as his home: he ran down the hill to the old chapel, where he waited for Silas” (85)
- “Fear is contagious. You can catch it. Sometimes all it takes is for someone to say that they’re scared for the fear to become real” (104)
- “The noise got louder – a scuttling sort of scuffling noise, and while Nick Farthing had no idea what it was, he was utterly, completely certain that whatever it would turn out to be would be the most scary terrible thing he had ever – would ever – encounter...He woke up screaming” (109)

- “You weren’t selfish. You need to be among your own kind. Quite understandable. It’s just harder out there in the world of the living, and we cannot protect you out there as easily. I wanted to keep you perfectly safe... but there is only one perfectly safe place for your kind and you will not reach it until all your adventures are over and none of them matter any longer” (117)
- “People want to forget the impossible. It makes their world safer” (159)
- “She gulped. Her mouth was dry, but she took one shaky step forward. Her right arm, which had been twisted up to the small of her back, was now numb, and she felt only pins and needles in her shoulder” (155)
- “But I can smell your fear. And I can hear you move and hear you breathe. And now that I know about your clever vanishing trick, I can feel you” (153)
- “Bod began to walk down the steps. He concentrated on the Fear, on raising the level of panic in the room, of making the Terror something tangible...”(153)
- “She was scared: scared of nice Mr. Frost and his scarier friends; scared of this room and its memories; even, if she were honest, a little afraid of Bod. He was no longer a quiet boy with a mystery, a link to her childhood. He was something different, something not quite human” (152)
- “She smelled like a victim, too, like fear-sweat, thought Jack, like his quarry. And wherever she was, the boy would be too, sooner or later” (151)
- “If you dare nothing, then when the day is over, nothing is all you will have gained” (128)

### Friendship/Compassion:

- “He was not going to argue with his new friend. She made him happy” (23)
- “Bod and Scarlett wandered the graveyard together every weekday afternoon, tracing names with their fingers, writing them down...she would tell him stories that she had been read or learned, and sometimes she would tell him about the world outside, about cars and buses and television and aeroplanes...” (25)
- “Scarlett put her hands into the pocket of her anorak and walked down the hill without saying good-bye, convinced that Bod was holding out on her, and at the same time suspecting that she was being unfair, which made her angrier” (26)
- “They walked on the path together, a small girl in a bright orange anorak and a small boy in a grey winding sheet” (35)
- “He looked for playmates, but found no one and saw nothing but a large grey dog, which prowled the gravestones, always keeping its distance from him, slipping between gravestones and through shadows” (40)
- “So Bod told them. He told them how no one liked him or wanted to play with him, how no one appreciated him or cared, and how even his guardian had abandoned him” (43)
- “He put the paperweight down on the ground that had once been a nettle-patch, placed it in the place that he estimated her head would have been, and pausing only to look at his

handiwork for a moment, he went through the railing and made his way, rather less gingerly, back up the hill” (80)

- “It’s only death. I mean, all my best friends are dead” (98)
- “But I’m giving you a chance, more than you ever gave my family” (151)
- “he remembered the way that Scarlett had held him and how safe he had felt, if only for a moment, and how fine it would be to walk safely in the lands beyond the graveyard, and how good it was to be master of his own small world” (130)
- “I just wanted to know if you were real. All these years I thought you were just something in my head. And I sort of forgot about you. But I didn’t make you up, and you’re back, you’re in my head, and you’re in my world too” (130)
- “Bod had allowed himself no friends among the living...Still, he remembered Scarlett, had missed her for years after she went away, had long ago faced the fact that he would never see her again. And now she had been here in his graveyard, and he had not known her...” (127)