**The Haunted**

**By Jack Prelutsky**

From *Nightmares: Poems to Trouble your Sleep*

On a hilltop bleak and bare

looms the castle of despair

only phantoms linger there

within its dismal walls.

Through the dark they’re creeping, crawling,

frenzied furies battling, brawling,

sprawling, calling, caterwauling

through the dusky halls.

Filmy visions, ever flocking

dart through chambers, crudely mocking,

rudely rapping, tapping, knocking

on the crumbling doors.

Tortured spirits whine and wail,

they grope and grasp, they widly flail,

their hollow voices rasp and rail

beneath the moldering floor.

…

In the corners, eyes are gleaming,

everywhere are nightmares streaming,

diabolic horrors screaming

in the sombrous air.

So shun this place where specters soar—

it’s you and you they’re waiting for

to haunt your souls forevermore

in their castle of despair.