

The Curse of the Blue Figurine by John Bellairs

Subject: Mystery and detective stories

Book List: Grade 6

Props: Book with figurine and note inside



Do you like ghost stories? Johnny Dixon loves ghost stories. He loves to listen to them, especially at night when it's dark and spooky. Do you think ghosts are real? Johnny Dixon doesn't and he told the professor so. "Oh, really," says the professor. "Well, you just might be surprised one of these days. What about Father Baart, the ghost that haunts the church you go to with your grandparents? People swear his ghost is real." Johnny does go to church with his grandparents but he's never heard about a ghost. So, the professor tells him the story.

Back in the 1880s, Father Baart, the rector of St. Michael's Church, hired a woodcarver to do some work on the church. People say that the woodcarver gave Father Baart something when he left. No one knows for sure what that something was, but a lot of the older people in town think it was a statue or a book or anyway some sort of evil object that allowed Father Baart to do all sorts of nasty things and may, in the end, have caused his own death. Soon after the woodcarver gave Father Baart whatever it was, there were a number of bizarre accidents where several enemies of Father Baart were actually killed. He, unfortunately, was not well liked. Soon after that, Father Baart himself mysteriously and suddenly disappeared. He's never been seen alive again but several people say they've seen his ghost at dusk standing in the aisle of the church.

Johnny thought that was a pretty good story. It gave him chills. But he talked to his grandfather who had never seen the ghost. Johnny hadn't seen it either, so he decided it was just a lot of talk.

Until one day when Johnny was down in the basement of St. Michael's church. Out of the corner of his eye he saw something move. (*Look quickly to the right*) When he looked carefully at the brick wall, he saw a circle of tiny grey spiders. They were moving all around but always staying in that circle. Suddenly, while he was watching, they just vanished. He went to the brick. It was loose. He got it out and behind was an old book. (*Pull out book and dust it off*) He dusted it off and opened it up. Inside was a little blue ceramic statue and a rolled up piece of paper. (*Show statue, pull out note and read it*) Johnny unrolled the paper and read it,

*Whoever removes these things from the church
does so at his own peril—Reginald Baart*

Johnny was excited and ran home to show it to his grandfather. (*Stop and look startled*) Will anything happen to Johnny for taking it from the church? And why is his grandfather's house suddenly infested with tiny grey spiders? (*Hold up book*) *The Curse of the Blue Figurine* by John Bellairs.