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Once Upon a Tomb: Gravely Humorous Verses

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Lewis, J. Patrick. *Once Upon a Tomb: Gravely Humorous Verses*. Illustrated by Simon Bartram. Candlewick Press, 2005. ISBN 0763618373. \$16.99. 32 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Humorous poetry;

Subject: Death--Juvenile poetry; Humorous poetry, American; Children's poetry, American;

Books--Reviews;

Sometimes humor can be found in the most unexpected places: for example, a graveyard. Lewis explores the humor in death in his hilariously illustrated collection of epitaphs. Some are more sedate and even profound, like "Lighthouse Keeper" and others are what Lewis himself describes on the book's back flap as "one-liners," such as "Underwear Salesman" and "Mailman." A former economics professor, Lewis shows his old profession through his brief and carefully rhymed verses. Bartram's bright, goofy illustrations maintain the fun feeling of the poems and remind readers that, as in life, death has its silly moments.