Bobby the Ghost
Supernatural Legend

Informant:
I am currently living in Logan, Utah and Utah State University. I grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico with my parents and 4 younger siblings. I have three younger brothers and one younger sister. My family was a very religious Mormon family, but we lived in an area that was predominantly Catholic and Atheist.

Context:
In high school I did ballet a lot and spent most of my time at the dance studio when I wasn’t in school. We performed in an old theater called the Kimo Theater in downtown Albuquerque. The theater was built in 1927 so it was really old and the design was a really odd combination of Art Deco style and Native American art styles. There were animal skulls on the sides of the stage with red lights behind them so it looked like the skulls had glowing red eyes. The building was so old that the pipes would creak and break frequently. The dressing rooms were below the stage off of this dimly lit concrete hallway with exposed pipes. It was really dark down in the dressing room so we would call it the “dungeon” and the dance moms who helped down there were “dungeon moms.” It was very easy to believe that the theater was haunted, or at least understand why people thought it was haunted.

Text:
The first I was set to perform in the Kimo Theater, some of the other girls who had been there longer told me the story of Bobby the ghost. They told me back in the 50s they used to use boilers to heat the theater. One day during a show one of the boilers exploded and it killed this little boy named Bobby who was in the theater. So ever since then Bobby haunts the theater and he rattles the pipes and curses performers. If you didn’t want to have Bobby curse you and make you perform badly or get hurt, you had to give him a gift. So sometime during dress rehearsals you had to put your gift to Bobby in the Shrine. The shrine was this little cutout hole in the wall near the stairs that went up from the Dungeon. The shrine was full of toys, signed dance shoes,
cards, candy, fake flowers, etc. Every girl put something in the shrine every time we started a new performance season and ask Bobby to help them perform well. The theater managers never cleaned out the shrine unless someone left food or the Dungeon flooded because of the old pipes.

Texture:
The story of Bobby the ghost was always told by a group of older dancers to the new girls. It was always told with an air of seriousness. The older girls would often try and tell it in the most spooky way possible to scare the youngest girls. Everyone put something in the shrine and treated Bobby with respect regardless of whether or not they believed the story.

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