Narrator: We are presenting a fantasy novel, Doll Bones, by Holly Black. Poppy, Alice, and Zach are lifelong friends who play an on-going make-believe game where their action figures and dolls become pirates, thieves, mermaid and warriors. The Great Queen, a bone-china doll locked away in Poppy’s mother’s cabinet, rules over all the characters in their games. The threesome are ridiculed for being too old, as middle schoolers, to play imaginary games which leads to tension between the friends. In this scene, they are presented with an opportunity for a real life adventure. Poppy is read by ________________, Alice is read by ________________, Zach is read by ________________, and I am _________________ the narrator.

Zach: So are you going to tell me what’s going on?

Poppy: You’re going to laugh, but you shouldn’t.

Alice: Poppy saw a ghost.

Zach: You’re just trying to freak me out. This is some kind of stupid…….. The Queen (shocked). So what? You brought me all the way out here to see a doll?

Alice: Just shut up a minute.

Poppy: I know you told us you weren’t going to come over the other day, but I thought you might anyway. And I couldn’t just go in the cabinet and get the Queen if Mom was there. So I took the doll out of the case that night when we had the argument and moved around some of Mom’s other stuff to hide what I’d done. But that night—well, I saw the dead girl.

Zach: You mean you had a nightmare.

Alice: Just shut up a minute.

Poppy: It wasn’t like a regular dream. It wasn’t like dreaming at all. She was sitting on the end of my bed. Her hair was blond, like the doll’s, but it was tangled and dirty. She was wearing a nightdress smeared with mud. She told me I had to bury her. She said she couldn’t rest until her bones were in her own grave, and if I didn’t help her, she would make me sorry.

Zach: Her bones?
Poppy: Did you know that bone china has real bones in it? Her clay was made from human bones. Little-girl bones. That hair threaded through her scalp is the little girl’s hair. And the body of the doll is filled with her leftover ashes.

Alice: I told her that you wouldn’t believe us and that you wouldn’t want to help.

Zach: Help with what? Help you *bury a doll*? Why would you need to wake me up in the middle of the night to help you do that?

Poppy: Eleanor Kerchner is real. That’s the doll-girl’s name. She told me about herself. Her father was some kind of worker for a china manufacturer, designing and decorating pottery, and when Eleanor died, her dad went totally crazy. He couldn’t bear to put her in the ground, so he took her body to the kilns at his job, chopped her up, and cremated her. He ground up her burnt bones and used them to make a batch of bone china, then poured it into a mold cast from one of Eleanor’s favorite dolls. So her grave stayed empty.

Zach: She told you that?

Poppy: Each night she told me a little bit more of her story. She’s not going to rest until we bury her. And she’s not going to let us rest either. She promised to make us miserable unless we help her.

Narrator: Will they journey together to find Eleanor’s grave and lay her to rest? Does the Great Queen’s ghost visit again? Read *Doll Bones* by Holly Black for a fascinating story of evolving friendships, spooky ghosts and mystery all in one. Beware, you may need a night light after reading!