

### Strange Creatures

I don't believe in strange phenomena, but late one night, I was shocked to see a creepy and eerie sight in the mountains.

It was the Experimental Learning Camp held by our school counsellor. I went hiking with the social worker and some of my schoolmates. We climbed to the top of the hill. It was already six in the evening. We found a comfortable place where we could settle down and stay overnight. With the power of teamwork and good communication, the tent was set up efficiently and the fire was kindled. All of us sat in a circle surrounding the campfire. We started chatting. Someone suggested that we tell haunted stories. Most of us were excited, especially me. I am always ready to listen to ghost stories even though I don't believe in strange phenomena. I believe that ghosts don't exist and haunted stories are just for fun and amusement. Each of us shared our own stories.

Then it was time for dinner. The ingredients were already prepared, but one of us had to go down to the river to get some water for cooking. It was a fair distance from the campsite to the river. Moreover, the road was a bit dark. Everyone was reluctant to go after hearing the ghost stories. "I will go and get the water by myself," I heard myself volunteering bravely. "There are no ghosts in this world. You are all cowards! They were so pleased that they handed me a bucket immediately. I took it and headed straight down the dim and gloomy road.

When I walked past the barbecue area, I was completely shocked at the horrifying scene. What I saw was a group of unknown creatures wandering around the barbecue pits. Although they looked similar to human beings, their faces were different colours, like brown, green and white. They looked scary and frightening with their emotionless faces. The creepiest thing was that the sullen creatures were walking around the pits aimlessly and quietly. Suddenly it started to rain and flash of lightening crossed the sky. All at once the creatures disappeared. I was horrified and shaking like a leaf. I had no idea if they were aliens or ghosts. I didn't know what I should do, so I ran frantically back to the campsite with an empty bucket.

Not wanting to let others know about my shameful reaction to the strange phenomena that I had encountered, I told a lie. I told everyone that I had lost my way. They accepted my apology and everything was fine until the next morning. The social worker introduced us to another team of people with whom she was conducting an activity. I was extremely surprised when I saw them. They were a troop of scouts with their faces painted white, green and brown.

I heard them complaining about their punishment given by their coach. "I was exhausted after walking fifty laps around the BBQ pits yesterday," one muttered. "Oh, yes, and it rained suddenly. Luckily, we hid under the wooden tables nearby. What a punishment," his friend replied.

I was embarrassed and came to realize my ignorance. I learnt that sometimes what we see is not the truth. We should always keep calm and evaluate comprehensively before we judge.