9 True Ghost Stories & Unexplained Mysteries from Listeners 👀 🕯️ LEPster Writing Competition [1006]

In this episode I am going to read out some stories written by listeners of this podcast.

All the stories I am going to read out here were sent to me as part of a writing competition which I launched ages ago.

The competition was put on hold for a few months, but finally here it is.

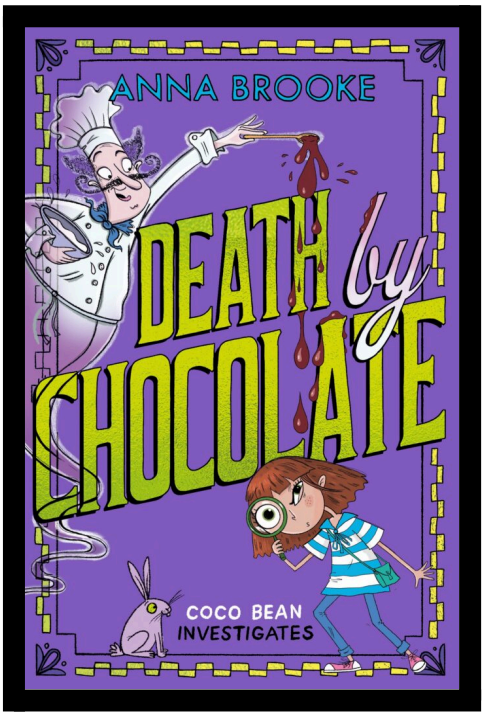
In episode 984 earlier this year, I spoke to author Anna Brooke and she told us about some extremely strange experiences she had in her home. She believes they were paranormal experiences, including visitations by the spirits of people who lived in her building, and who died in tragic circumstances.

Those experiences were the inspiration for her latest book. Admittedly it is a fun book for children and not really scary, but the inspiration came from these things which she really experienced, and which left quite an impression on her.

The book is called “Death by Chocolate”, and it’s appropriate for children aged around 8-12 - it’s more fun than scary, and is a sort of detective mystery that your children will enjoy very much. My daughter loved it - especially the sense that she was working out who had committed the crime.

It’s about a hotel which is haunted by a chef - a chocolatier who met a sticky end. The character of Coco has to work out what happened to him, in order to give him peace so he can move on and stop haunting the hotel.

It is available now, from Chicken House publishing and you should be able to find it in any good bookshop - it’s an English language book of course.



During the episode, we launched this competition to encourage my listeners to share any stories of creepy experiences that they/you have had.

You might be thinking, “Luke, that was quite a long time ago now! Why the delay?”

Life got in the way (as it does), and then I thought - why not wait until Halloween to do this episode? It seems appropriate to talk about creepy and spooky stories at this time of year, when, according to folklore, the “veil” between our world and the spirit world becomes *thin*. So, the time is right for creepy tales.

The winning story (the one that Anna and I like the best) will receive a copy of Anna’s book, and will be read out on the podcast.

But also, Anna and I will make a selection of other stories to read out in the episode.

That was the plan.

I didn't expect to get many stories, if any, to be honest! This is because, as a sceptic I assumed that there wouldn't be that many paranormal experiences to share, because they're rare, aren't they?

But, amazingly, I got absolutely loads of stories. 74 stories in total.

Maybe *you* sent in a story. It has taken me ages to finish this episode. I am sorry for taking so long. I didn't intend for this to happen. But, better late than never!

In general the quality of writing was high, but we really had to narrow down the list to a manageable number. In the end I managed to reduce the number to just 9 stories.

I am going to read out all 9 of those stories, including the winner.

So, I am very sorry if your story was not included in this shortlist.

However, I do want to showcase every single story I received, so on the PDF for this episode you will see:

- The 9 stories in our shortlist, which I will read out during the episode.
- And ***all the other stories*** that were not included in the list and which I won't be reading out during this episode. All those other stories will be on the PDF too, so you can read them as well - and I encourage you to do so. So, all 74 stories are included for your reading pleasure.

I like doing competitions on this podcast, but I don't really like picking one single winner. I find it very hard, and I want to encourage everyone who took the time to write a story and send it to me, and again - apologies to those people who wrote a story which did not get included in my shortlist. I had to reject quite a lot of stories which I still think are great. So if you didn't get picked, don't feel bad or anything like that.

The winning story is simply the one Anna and I decided was our favourite - which one was moving, gripping, entertaining, and simply enjoyable to read,

but of course this is just our humble opinion and our particular choice, and you might have a different favourite.

If that is the case, please say in the comments which story is *your* favourite, and why you like it. I am sure the writer will appreciate getting the feedback.

Sorry that we can't offer prizes to everyone who took part. We really enjoyed reading all these descriptions.

On the topic of beliefs, I remain sceptical about paranormal things and believe there must be some kind of rational explanation for most of things, or perhaps some things are just beyond our understanding but not necessarily due to paranormal or supernatural causes, but I still find all of these descriptions fascinating.

Assuming that the people who wrote these were telling the truth, and not mistaken in some way - then, yes, I am unable to explain what happened in each case. Life is mysterious, and the world is a mysterious place. Anyway, I am the sceptical one, and Anna is much more of a believer than me, as you can hear in episode 984.

Like in the BBC podcast series "Uncanny" (especially recommended by Anna, if you like this kind of thing) we can divide ourselves into the *sceptics* and the *believers*. Which one are you? I am a sceptic. Anna is a believer.

After each story I will briefly summarise what happened, just to make sure you understood everything, but I'll try to keep that short.

I would happily speculate about each one and attempt to give my rational explanations, but I'm not going to do that. I am just going to read out the stories and I will let you the listener make up your own mind about each one.

The aim here is to showcase some fantastic stories and descriptions written by my listeners. I was very impressed by the overall quality of writing here.

I've made a few language corrections to the stories in this shortlist, just to clear things up, but I didn't have to change very much and I didn't do any major re-writing. I just corrected a few small errors here are there, which were in the stories as they were emailed to me.

Also, most of these stories had lovely little messages attached to them from the writers, expressing their sincere gratitude for the podcast. I have removed those, choosing instead just to present the stories without many other comments. But thank you for the lovely words if you did write something. I always appreciate that sort of thing very much.

Again, this is our personal shortlist of stories. If you want to read all the ones I received, check the PDF - they are all there, presented without any corrections or edits.

A content warning

Some of these stories are very personal and contain strong themes of loss, grief and emotional trauma.

So, here is a little content warning at the beginning - some of these stories contain descriptions of not only scary experiences, but also some traumatic ones including the deaths of family members or loved ones, or other similarly emotionally-charged experiences.

If those things trigger strong emotions and feelings in you, then please do continue with caution while listening to this episode.

So, that is just a little warning - there are some strong emotional themes in this episode, that could be upsetting if you have had similar experiences yourself.

The shortlist of stories featured in this episode

1. Encounter on the Balcony
2. Grandmother's Medallion

3. Creepy Serendipity at the Bookshop
4. Therapy of a Ghost
5. We Did a Really Good Job
6. Who is that Baby Who is Crying?
7. Anna and the Man in the Corridor
8. The Password
9. The Mystical Bank Account

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1. Encounter on the Balcony

-H

It is not surprising that many people are sceptical about ghosts nowadays. Kids are perceptive to scary tales (and like them), but the more science they learn at school, the stronger their immunity to mysticism becomes.

However, different things do happen. Probably, everyone has a few spooky stories to tell.

I can tell you that nothing blows away your scientific knowledge like a nice walk in the evening forest, especially if you take a shortcut and suddenly discover a human skeleton staring piercingly at you with empty, bottomless eye sockets.

Strangely enough, science cannot help you cope with the weakness in your legs, and when a tree branch catches your shoulder, your imagination immediately draws a picture of a bony hand clutching you with a death grip.

Real ghosts do exist, of course. I remember when I was a child, we lived with my grandma on the first floor (or was it the ground floor in *British*?) of an apartment building. There was a recessed balcony, a very useful place. It held all the valuables that didn't fit in the apartment: empty jars, pots, garden tools, skis (not Grandma's, but my brother's), a bicycle (also not Grandma's, mine), and God knows what else. There were also clotheslines strung everywhere. Grandma was very provident and thrifty. This entire system of things, carefully arranged by caring hands, maintained a fragile but stable balance for the time being.

One winter evening, when the darkness had thickened outside, we were sitting in the living room. Someone was reading. Someone was watching TV. Suddenly this

peaceful scene was rudely disturbed by a terrible noise on the balcony, the crash of falling things and the clanging of pots.

When we finally emerged from our stupor caused by the horror that had gripped us and looked out, we saw our uninvited guest rushing off down the street. He glided away swiftly, as if carried by the wind, and seemed to leave no traces in the snow. It was undoubtedly a ghost.

-H

Summary

H begins with some humorous reflections on ghosts, fear and the limits of scientific thinking. H then recalls a childhood experience in a flat shared with Grandma, whose balcony was packed with carefully arranged household objects. One dark winter evening, the family heard a tremendous crash outside. When they looked, they saw a mysterious figure fleeing down the street, apparently gliding over the snow without leaving footprints. H concludes that the visitor must have been a ghost.

A note about the tone

I like this story because it plays with the idea that ghost stories can't be true because they must have scientific explanations, but this rational thinking quickly escapes you when you have a genuinely creepy experience, and suddenly your mind starts to interpret things being supernatural and threatening.

I think the final sentence, "It was undoubtedly a ghost," is almost certainly intended as a joke, with the humour coming from the contrast between H's confident conclusion and a more ordinary explanation we can imagine. Couldn't it have been a crow? We assume supernatural explanations for unexplained events.

However, that's my scepticism coming through. Other stories in this list are harder to explain, as we are about to see.

I am curious to see what your interpretations are of all these stories. Leave your comments in the comment section.

2. Grandmother's Medallion

- Silvia

My Sicilian grandmother was a tiny hunchbacked person with long white hair she wore tight in a bun. She was very severe and spoke only the bare essentials.

At that time, it was the fifties, and my family went to Sicily every summer to visit her. The grandfather was already dead.

I enjoyed the Sicilian holiday very much, though I was afraid of my grandmother.

She wore around her neck a golden chain with an ivory medallion beautifully carved with a flower relief. But the fact that excited my curiosity was that it could be opened as a small box.

"What is inside?" I asked grandmother, once.

She gave me a disapproving look and said: "Girls should not be curious."

My grandmother died when I was fifteen. Some days after the funeral I asked my father if I could get her medallion, and he gave it to me. I couldn't wait for the moment to open it. I was so excited, that my hands were shaking. Finally, I moved the tiny hook and the lid popped off.

The first thing I noticed was a perfume so intense that I involuntarily pushed my head away. It smelled like withering jasmine, something like rotting flowers in a cemetery. I pulled myself together and looked inside the medallion. There was an old picture on the bottom, one of these old sepia-coloured photographs, almost erased, but still recognizable: it was a little girl with long hair falling on her shoulders and a lace dress. She looked at me with large light eyes.

But the small box held something more: a lock of blond hair, bound with a velvet ribbon. But that wasn't all.

The moment I opened the box, I had the impression I could hear something in my ears. It wasn't a simple noise like tinnitus: I heard something like a prayer, yes, I heard women praying that kind of litany they used to sing in Sicily to watch the dead.

I ran to my father and showed him the picture, “Who is she? Do you know her?”

He looked attentively. “The hair,” he said, “is of the same colour as my mother’s: honey blond. And the little girl… I remember that once, when I was a child, I heard two maids whispering to each other: they said that the “mistress hasn’t been the same after ‘the fact’” and alluded to a dead child. I thought immediately that it could be a sister who died in mysterious circumstances before I was born” said my father.

I was so baffled by the story that I forgot to ask him about the smell and the noise coming from the box.

The same day, as I opened it again, I found that the smell became so strong that the whole room was filled with it. The same happened to the noise. I clearly heard steps going into a wood or through bushes and I believed I could hear a voice, or better, a stifled lament.

Scared, I put the medallion away, but I didn’t resist very long: I had to take it again. I faced the smell of rotting flowers waiting for the noise to come. And it came. This time it was a clear child crying. I was deeply upset. I was sure that it was not a figment of the imagination: it was a message to me to go back to the home of my ancestors. I had to know more about it.

Dramatic events – my father died and my mother became ill - made me forget the medallion. When it ended up in my hands again, I knew: it was time to go back to Sicily.

I booked a flight to Catania and a B&B in Modica, the beautiful town where the grandfather’s family once lived. The next day I went to the municipal archive and asked for the documents they had about my family.

The clerk looked at me incredulously and seemed to hesitate. As I asked the reason, he said: “It’s very strange. A couple of months ago there was a lot of talk about a discovery of human remains in the countryside, some kilometres away “- he showed with the arm the direction – “and about a family of this name.”

“Why?” I asked very surprised.

“An old farmhouse was sold to some tourists. As the construction of the new house began, they found in a hole under the cellar the skeleton of a small girl. She must have died eighty years ago. How do we know her name? Because she wore a necklace with the image of the holy mother on one side and her name and the birth date on the other side. The carabinieri found out that it had to be the first daughter of the landowner’s family, who was kidnapped at the age of five and despite the payment of the ransom was never found.”

I asked the clerk where the skeleton was interred and he showed me the way to the cemetery.

Therefore, instead of an archive I visited the municipal cemetery where I paid tribute to a girl aunt.

When I was back in my B&B, I opened the medallion, and I noticed that the perfume was almost gone and no noise came to my ears.

The photograph was still in its place, but it seemed to me very pale and as I touched the lock of hair it dissolved into a golden powder.

- Silvia

Summary

This is a supernatural mystery by Silvia, who inherits a strange medallion from her grandmother when she dies. The medallion seems to contain messages from a dead child, leading Silvia to uncover a tragic family secret involving the kidnapping and death of her young aunt. Once the truth is discovered and Silvia visits the child's grave, the supernatural activity stops.

Let me tell the story again, in other words, just to make sure you understood all the details.

1. When Silvia was a child in the 1950s, her family visited her grandmother in Sicily every summer. Her grandmother was a small, strict, rather frightening woman who didn't speak very much. Silvia said her grandmother was *hunchbacked*. Hunchbacked is an adjective that describes someone with an obvious, permanent forward bend, roundness, or hump on the upper part of their back. A hunchbacked person has to bend forward, and might have a large rounded bump on their back,

and I suppose to a child that might seem a little bit strange, and possibly frightening in the case of this grandmother who apparently was quite strict and didn't talk a lot.

2. Her grandmother always wore a beautiful ivory medallion on a gold chain around her neck. The medallion was like a tiny box that could be opened. Silvia was very curious about what was inside, but her grandmother refused to tell her.

3. When Silvia was fifteen, her grandmother died. After the funeral, Silvia asked her father if she could have the medallion. He agreed.

4. Silvia excitedly opened the medallion for the first time. Inside, she found an old photograph of a little girl and a lock of blonde hair tied with a ribbon.

5. When she opened the medallion, she noticed a very strong smell of dying flowers. She also thought she could hear women praying, as if they were attending a funeral.

6. She showed the photograph to her father. He remembered hearing servants talking about a child who had died in mysterious circumstances. He suspected that the little girl might have been his sister, who had died before he was born.

7. Every time Silvia opened the medallion, the smell became stronger and she heard more strange sounds. She heard footsteps moving through bushes, someone crying quietly, and eventually the clear sound of a child crying.

8. Silvia became convinced that the sounds were not imaginary. She believed that the little girl was trying to communicate with her and that she needed to return to Sicily to discover what had happened.

9. Unfortunately, her father died and her mother became ill. These events distracted Silvia from the mystery, and she put the medallion away for some time.

10. Eventually, Silvia decided to travel back to Sicily. She flew to Catania and stayed in Modica, where her grandfather's family had once lived. She visited the local archives to investigate her family's history.

11. An employee at the archives told Silvia that workers had recently discovered the skeleton of a little girl buried beneath the cellar of an old farmhouse.

12. The skeleton was about eighty years old. The girl had been wearing a necklace with her name and date of birth on it. This allowed the police to identify her as the daughter of a local landowning family.

13. The little girl had been kidnapped when she was five years old. Her family had paid money to the kidnappers to get her back, but she had never returned. Nobody had known what had happened to her until the skeleton was discovered.

14. Silvia realised that the dead girl was her aunt, her father's older sister. Instead of continuing her research in the archives, she went to the cemetery to visit the girl's grave and pay her respects.

15. When Silvia returned to her accommodation, she opened the medallion again. This time, the terrible smell had almost disappeared and she could no longer hear any strange sounds.

16. The photograph had become very pale, and when she touched the lock of blonde hair, it turned into golden dust.

17. The story suggests that the spirit of the dead girl had been trying to communicate through the medallion. Now that her remains had been discovered and Silvia had visited her grave, the girl could finally rest in peace.

This is the winning story by the way.

Both Anna and I thought it was very moving, and well-written. Putting aside the believability of this - because this is not about writing the most believable story - just the most interesting story. This isn't a test of the truthfulness of these stories. I will let you decide for yourselves about that. Anna and I found that the evocative descriptions of the mysterious paranormal moments were very effective, and they served the emotional heart of the story. It has a good balance between spooky

elements and emotional elements. The sense of mystery is clear, and there is a satisfying sense of resolution at the end. So, we both picked this one as a particular favourite.

But so many other stories which I received were of a similar quality, as you will see.

Congratulations Silvia! I will be in touch by email to get your postal address so that a copy of the book can be sent to you. You might enjoy reading it yourself, or you can offer it as a gift.

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3. We did a Really Good Job

- Yoann

Many years ago I fell in love with woodworking. I first watched a video on Youtube about a famous Japanese woodworker named Ishitani.

Then, after that I watched a lot of different videos from different creators until I decided to create my first piece of furniture myself.

Before going any further in my story, I have to go back in time. I lost my grandfather 15 years ago when I was still a teenager.

My grandfather was a special person to me. I loved him and admired him a lot even though I spent too little time with him during my childhood. It was an awful loss for me but I never spoke about it, not even to my mother. I'm not a particularly talkative person nor even an expressive one.

Going back to our story, I'm now a new self-apprentice woodworker and I want to start my journey through my new passion by creating my first piece of furniture: a bookcase!

Trust me, I am a fully rational person.. Or at least I was. But when I started working on this project, I could hear my grandfather talking to me, in my head.

It was like having a conversation with him. He gave me advice. Advice that I had probably created by myself in my head before he gave it to me, but I listened to it.

I worked on this project for 2 weeks long and everyday he was in my head, all day long, like an imaginary person I could talk to, like a child with his imaginary friend.

Even though I felt it was odd, I didn't ask myself too many questions and I enjoyed the moment. I was here, alone in my garage, creating something with my imaginary dead grandfather and when I get home, nothing! The voices disappeared.

I finished my bookcase and installed it in my dining room. I was really proud of my creation and guess what? So was my grandfather.

A few weeks later, my mom came to my house. She didn't know I had been working on this project or even that I had this new hobby. She entered the house, saw the bookcase, and froze.

She asked me where I had bought this bookcase. I told her I had built it, all by myself, and she started crying.

On that day, I learned that my grandfather had built exactly the same piece of furniture many years before when my mother was still a child.

I had no clue that my grandfather had once enjoyed woodworking or even that he was a handyman. How is it possible that I had created exactly the same bookcase as my grandfather did 40 years ago and that he came back in my head at this exact period of time, helped me and then left me when I had finished?

Since then my grandfather has never come back into my head. The last thing he said to me (or perhaps *we* said to me) was "We did a really good job".

I have too many questions now that I still don't want answers to.

- Yoann

Summary

This is a touching and mysterious story about Yoann, who discovers a passion for woodworking and begins hearing his dead grandfather's voice while building his first bookcase. After completing it, he shows his mum, who is shocked. It turns out that Yoann’s grandfather had built exactly the same piece of furniture forty years earlier. Yoann is left wondering whether this was an extraordinary coincidence, and

that he had simply imagined his grandfather's voice in his own head or whether his grandfather's spirit had somehow returned to help him build the bookcase.

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4. Creepy Serendipity at the Bookshop

- Alex

This story is creepy as hell and I swear it is entirely true. No ghosts or zombies here. Let's leave that stuff for kids. What I'm about to tell you is much more disturbing and unsettling than that.

It happened to me when I was out and about walking around Saint Petersburg alone, because I just wanted to break free from my family for a few hours and communicate with the city face-to-face, because Saint Petersburg is a city that deserves that. It used to be the capital of Russia, a magnificent and yet melancholic, gloomy place. This city has a character. It will lure you in and spit you out at the drop of a hat or hug you tighter than your own mother and never let go. It plays games with you, and if you're not much of a player, you might find it a bit impolite for a city to do that.

On that day I stumbled upon a book market where they had thousands of unique and peculiar specimens alongside your typical pulp fiction, romance, drama and whatnot.

One thing about me is that I could easily spend hours and hours on end in places like that. I have to confess I'm not much of a reader, but holding books in my hands, skimming through pages, admiring the covers, even buying them when my wife is not looking, is one of the purest forms of pleasure for me. I also like adding titles onto my reading list, the books I will read one day.

One at a time, and slowly but surely, I do read a book or two every now and again. My reading list currently features 572 items. According to my modest calculations, I will read all of these books by the time hell freezes over with the Devil in it.

Speaking of which, the thing that happened to me was directly related to, if not set up by His Infernal Majesty. The next book on my reading list was a play called Faust written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a prominent German author whom I know

nothing about apart from the fact that he is considered to be a clever man with something to say about the Devil, the nature of human desires, free will and all that.

So, there I was, admiring hundreds and hundreds of books, seeing what would catch my eye and trying to figure out if there was any chance I could find the one I was after.

I did not want to disturb the bookseller for two reasons. First: the salesman could have actually sold me Faust and that would have been the end of my book-admiring session. Because, obviously, as soon as you find what you need, you are supposed to leave. At least that is how it works in the mind of a socially awkward person such as myself.
The second reason is that the bookseller was nowhere to be seen, to my great satisfaction. So I had the liberty of browsing and even holding in my hands hundreds of gems without experiencing any pressure.

Just a couple of minutes later I noticed a figure in my peripheral vision. Upon closer inspection, I concluded it was just a regular man, casually looking around and seeing what's what just like me.

Suddenly, and surprising even myself, I immediately asked him if he knew where I could find Faust. Now, that is extraordinary in itself, because I am not the sort of person who strikes up a conversation with strangers. I am a bit too shy for that and tend to mind my own business, thank you very much, and in addition to that, what kind of question is that? Why would a stranger know where to find a book I needed? He does not work there, he is not a friend of the owner or anything. For all I know, he is probably there for the first and the last time in his entire life just as I am.

Thinking back, I might have blurted out that I was on a mission to get Faust, just out of snobbery, to demonstrate that I was not some simpleton looking for an action thriller. Even so, since when am I letting strangers know how intellectually developed I am the very second I see them? The reason I opened my mouth does not cease to puzzle me.

But what happened next still sends shivers down my spine to this day…

The man looked as if he had been struck by lightning. He said something like "There is no way in hell", fumbled in his backpack and pulled out the very book I was

asking about. He said that he'd come to that market with the sole purpose of finding someone to sell that book to.

I was baffled, but I wanted that moment to look cinematic in my memory, so on the surface I was as cool as a cucumber and I just said: "Well, you've found someone, now, haven't you?" I then grabbed the book, sent him something around 1 euro through a banking app, and we parted ways never to see each other again.

Now, when I think about that story, I can't shake off an eerie feeling that somehow that book was meant to fall into my hands. And given the context of the play, which is about the Devil interacting with a scholar, purchasing his soul, I can't help but wonder … Wasn't the Devil trying to interact with me that day?

The end.

- Alex

Summary

This is a mysterious and humourous story written by Alex, who was casually exploring a book market in Saint Petersburg, when he unexpectedly asked a stranger where he could find a copy of Faust. Amazingly, the stranger had that exact book in his backpack and had come to the market specifically to sell it to someone. Alex bought the book for about one euro, but the extraordinary coincidence has troubled him ever since. Because Faust is a story about a man who makes a deal with the Devil, Alex can't help wondering whether something supernatural was involved in their meeting. He felt the devil's hand at work.

I wanted to know more, so I emailed Alex to find out what the consequences of this have been.

What has happened since coming into possession of this dark and mysterious book, in such dark and mysterious circumstances? Did he make some kind of pact with the devil that day? What is the nature of that pact? What powers and secrets have been revealed to Alex upon reading the words of this unholy text? Has he become a famous writer himself? Is he now a millionaire - the next Stephen King? Or has he found untold riches in some other area? But is his soul now in the possession of the devil himself? What price has Alex had to pay for this honour from St Nick? I wanted to know everything, and so I asked him.

He replied, and guess what?

He still hasn't read the book.

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5. Therapy of a Ghost

- Mira

I am not sure if you will acknowledge this story, Luke, because it seems to be creepy - but in truth, it isn't. Perhaps it is more mysterious than creepy. And it is all true. So this is a true story, whether you believe it or not.

It happened over ten years ago, when I was involved in the renovation of an old Victorian house in London. You know what such houses look like? They seem large when you look from outside, but inside they feel narrow, perhaps because of the high ceilings and the internal layout.

This house was surrounded by a large garden, full of bushes and neglected trees. It had four storeys: a basement, a ground floor, a first floor, and an attic. A few steps led to an old door; when you entered, you found yourself in a rather narrow hall. On the left there was just a wall with a small window at the end and then stairs leading down to the basement. On the right, a wall again, then doors to the saloon, and further stairs leading upstairs to a landing with doors to two rooms, and then more stairs leading up to the attic.

Although the house was large in square meters, subjectively it felt tight. The long, solid wall on the left in the main corridor and the stairs descending at the end did not create a welcoming atmosphere. You had to enter a room to find a slightly larger space, or climb the stairs searching for one. But the upstairs stairs seemed to melt into the next corridor, creating a sense of uncertainty, while from the stairs down you could see only the first few steps.

I was in charge of the renovation. The project was to put some light into the house, to make it more modern, and remove the atmosphere of neglect. In fact, before renovation the house itself already felt somewhat creepy. We strongly hoped to change that. Everything was carefully planned: colors, length and style of lamps: it was important to preserve the old style while transforming it from a neglected ruin into a beautiful, aristocratic home. To achieve such a transformation, we had to

change everything that contributed to the current atmosphere and appearance of the house.

The story happened when the saloon near the entrance had almost been done. With a lowered ceiling, white walls, beautiful crystal lamps, a new floor, and a few carefully chosen pieces of furniture, it looked like a bedroom for a princess and was completely unrecognizable compared to before. It also stood in a sharp contrast to the rest of the house.

Maybe it was the exhaustion from the whole day's work, or maybe something else, but the work on the corridor did not go so smoothly now. The task seemed simple: to repaint the wall. However, to do that, the wallpaper had to be removed first - and the wall seemed to strongly resist. The wallpaper clung stubbornly, and the workers had to use various tricks, and even force, to begin removing it. With every torn strip of wallpaper, a piece of plaster came off as well, revealing old patterns and colors beneath. But under one layer, another appeared, and then another. They emerged one by one, as if there were infinitely many of them.

Eventually, the working day ended, and only one worker remained, Waldek, hoping to earn some extra money.

Obviously the house had not been renovated for decades when a simple task like repainting the wall turned into a struggling attempt to achieve a smooth paintable surface. I watched in awe : layers revealed a touch to past years and past lives: there were times of just pink—who could have lived here then? Then strong black-and-white patterns, then grey tones… it seemed endless.

At 10 p.m., Waldek sat on the stairs to rest and took out a bottle of an energy drink. I stood nearby, looking at the devastated wall, thinking about passing years and unknown lives.

Suddenly, Waldek turned to me with a trembling voice:
- Do you hear that?
- What?

I had been so lost in thought that I hadn't noticed anything.

- There's a knock. Someone is knocking upstairs… listen!

Then I heard it. A clear knocking sound somewhere—like someone striking a wooden door.

-Yes, I hear it, - I said.
-And you are not afraid?! - Waldek asked.
- I hear it. There is knocking, - I replied. -So what?

The knocking repeated.

- What do you mean “so what”?
-There is knocking. I hear it, so I acknowledge it. That’s all. Nothing more.

-Sorry, I can’t work anymore today, - he said, gathering his things. -You are really not afraid?
-No, -I said. -I’m not afraid of knocking.

So Waldek left, and I stayed alone in the house. I went to sleep in the newly renovated saloon. I didn’t hear the knocking anymore. It stopped when he left. Maybe the room’s door was more soundproof, or he wanted just scare me. I didn’t care. I fell asleep. I must have fallen asleep quickly, tired from the day. Then I had a strange dream.

In my dream, I was not asleep but standing before the wall, watching how the layers on it fall apart one after another: not just painting layers and wallpapers, but plaster, bricks, and more bricks, until only the raw wooden structure remained. It was hollow, like a skeleton on which everything had been built. Wind moved through it, but I felt warmth. It was a warm wind for me. Then I felt very vividly the presence of somebody. And I knew it was someone who had lived in this house for years and can’t leave. Someone we called out by our demolition.

I am not afraid of so called ghosts. I don’t even know if I “believe” in them. I simply do not question the experiences I go through. And because I am a therapist, I felt the pain and deep loneliness of this presence and I wanted to comfort it.

So I asked it in my dream:
-What do you need? Do you want something? Are you scared?

At that moment, a heart appeared on the wooden structure. A large heart, as if painted by an unsteady hand. And I knew what it needed.

-I see, -I said. -I recognize you. Tell me your name, if you can, please.

And then I felt the name “Theresa” in my mind. It was not written. I simply received the direct information that this is Theresa.

-Don’t worry, -I said. -I will remember you.

The warm wind surrounded me for a moment, and that was it.

When I woke up in the morning and my team returned to work, I began to search for “Theresa.”

I found the information sooner than I expected. It was the name of the wife of one of the former inhabitants. They had no children and she was known as a strong, reserved woman, not very friendly, rather strict, and unforgettable. I also learned that the last owner of the house had a daughter who often claimed she felt a gentle touch on her head when no one else was around. Her mother didn’t believe in such things so told her she was imagining things. But I knew - it was Theresa, happy that a child was in the house.

Later on I went to the cemetery, found her forgotten grave and put flowers and candles on it.

The renovation was finished without any further disturbances and the house was sold.

Still the question remains: was my dream just „a dream” or was it reality hidden before our critical conscious mind? Was my discovery of Theresa a pure coincidence or have I really helped a soul who could not rest unforgiven and unloved? Who knows?

- Mira

Summary

I am assuming that Mira is male here, but I might be wrong, and if that is true - I apologise. In any case, the story is great.

This is a mysterious and touching story about Mira, who was renovating an old Victorian house in London. While stripping layers of wallpaper from a wall, he and a worker heard unexplained knocking sounds. The co-worker got scared and left. That night sleeping in the house, Mira had a vivid dream in which he was standing in front of the wall, and sensed the presence of a lonely woman called Theresa, who seemed to want love and recognition. When Mira investigated, he discovered that a woman with that name had really lived in the house. He visited Theresa's forgotten grave and left flowers and candles. Afterwards, the renovation continued without any further disturbances. Mira is left wondering whether he simply had a strange dream or whether he had genuinely helped the spirit of a lonely woman find peace.

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6. Who is that Baby Who is Crying?

- Svjetlana

It can happen that certain unexpected circumstances change the current course of your life and put you in a completely new reality.

It happened to me. Sudden onset of abdominal pain, emergency room, hospital, operating room and then - nothing.

The reconstitution of my consciousness started with the feeling of a very intense light striking from the ceiling and preventing me from opening my eyes normally.

A rhythmic, mechanical, endless „beep-beep“ sound kept explaining to me how I was surrounded by machines.

I was lying in the bed, from each of my arms, an infusion tube came out.
A very strange feeling in my nose – another tube passing through my nose and throat and the moment I became aware of it I started coughing.

Oh, Lord, what pain!! Breathless pain in my stomach! I tried to touch it with my hand and realized that there were bandages over it.

„Calm down, don't move, my dear“ - I could hear a gentle voice.

The young charming woman was sitting by my bed, a nurse with a compassionate face and big blue comforting eyes.

“I am Tania. How are you?”
„Could you turn off the light, please?“ – I said.
„Unfortunately I can't. We are in the intensive care unit and patients must be monitored. I'm sorry.“ – she replied.
„Can you dim it, at least?“ – I was almost begging.
„I'm deeply sorry, but it is not possible.“

I closed my eyes and felt abandoned, hopeless and as if I were the loneliest being in the world.

Then I realized that at the same time there was another sound present besides the artificial „beep-beep“ sounds, a baby's cry.

A baby was crying and it felt to me like an echo of my emotions.

Someone else was also lonely and desperate and somehow I could share that feeling with that other person, although a small one.

I opened my eyes again, and nurse Tania was still there. Gentle blue eyes were looking at me.

„It hurts a lot.“ – I said with tears.
„Darling, you must be strong. You were given the highest doses of painkillers and we have to wait until your body is ready to receive another one.“ – she took my hand in hers.

The baby's crying continued.
„Beep-beep“ sounds continued.
The pain continued.

The warmth of the nurse's hands made the waiting possible for me. My eyes were closed. The baby's crying became disturbing.
Were there some more hands for that little child?

At one moment I could feel the presence of someone else and I opened my eyes. A doctor was standing by my bed.

„Hi, how are you?“ – she asked.

„It hurts a lot.“
„Yes, I know, you have to be strong. Tonight is difficult, but tomorrow will be better.“ – she said.
„Doctor, can I ask you something?“ – I said.
„Sure. What is it?“
„Can anyone help that poor baby who cries so much all night, please?“
„Baby?!“ – she repeated with an unexpected tone of voice.
„Yes, baby, I said. Don't you hear the baby crying?“ – I had a feeling that I had done something wrong.
„There is no baby. We are in the adult ward. There are no babies here,“ – the doctor answered with a very serious face.

I cannot say whether the terrible pain that I felt, or that moment was harder for me. I could still hear the baby crying. I started to be very confused and afraid. I turned my head to Tania expecting support from her and saw two beautiful blue eyes full of sorrow watching me.

The silence from her side said more than any word could.

I closed my eyes, and felt lost. I would have given anything to escape from that place.
What was going on?! Was I losing my mind?!

I didn’t have a reason not to believe them. I didn’t have a reason not to believe myself.

I started to cry too and at that moment a kind of revelation happened.

It was me! It was baby me crying the whole time! The hospital I was in used to be a maternity hospital, exactly the one that I was born in.

It was the newborn me crying, many, many years earlier, just separated from my mom, lonely and terrified.

At that moment, the baby’s crying stopped.

I really didn’t know what made me make that connection, but at that moment and all the way until now, it seemed so logical to me and the only truth, the only possible reality.

The next morning I could hear the doctor telling her colleagues how I had had audio hallucinations during the night while she was observing me. I could also hear another voice saying something about side effects of some drugs, but for me it was totally irrelevant. I had my experience. It was real. It was unique.

Even later, if I spoke to someone about that special night of my life - and that happened with only a few people - I would use an informative tone without hesitation, I didn't leave space for any subsequent explanations or other interpretations of my experience.

A few months after I left the hospital and recovered totally, I wanted to visit Tania and thank her for all she had done for me during that heavy night in the hospital. I bought some flowers and went to the hospital.

"I would like to know if it is possible to have a short conversation with one of the nurses from the intensive care unit?" - I was at the hospital reception desk.

"You are not allowed to enter there." - said the gentleman at the desk.

"Yes, of course. I know that. But, if you could check if nurse Tania is on shift, please." - honestly, I didn't expect a warm welcome at the desk.

"Wait" - the gentleman took the phone and after a few words he exchanged with someone he said - "There is no nurse Tania."

"You mean, nurse Tania is not in the hospital today?" - I tried to correct him.

"I don't know about the hospital, but there is no Tania in the intensive care unit." - he answered with a trace of nervousness in his voice.

Suddenly, the doctor from the night I will remember forever appeared in the hallway, passing by the desk. Oh, that was so fantastic, I was so lucky!

"Excuse me." - I decided to address her. "Yes?.."

"I was your patient, I don't know if you remember.." - her smile interrupted my question.

“Of course I do! How are you? Nice to see you.” - I was so pleased by her kindness.

“I am great, thank you. How are you? How is the whole crew? How is nurse Tania? She was so kind and gentle and helpful..” - and as I kept talking I noticed how her mood changed.

“Tania?” - she repeated and that made me recall another moment when she had also repeated my words in a similar way.

“Yes, nurse Tania.” - my enthusiasm started to melt - “Do you remember? She was on the same shift with you the night just after my operation.”

“Hmm… I remember that night very well.” she said and there was a moment of hesitation before she continued. “You know, we never had a nurse with that name in our department.” …

Oh, what a shocking surprise! No more the beautiful sunny day in which I wanted to thank the kind nurse for taking care of me when I really needed it. I felt embarrassed, confused and for a moment almost lost as the night when I was in the hospital, just before I realized that I had had a kind of inexplicable connection with myself from the past.

But, this time I could escape that place and I did it.

After a short “Oo,, .. sorry, ..and bye” I just went out and walked away.

Summary

Svjetlana wakes up in intensive care after emergency surgery. While recovering, she hears a baby crying, even though the doctors insist there are no babies in the hospital. She becomes convinced that she is somehow hearing herself crying as a newborn in the very hospital where she was born.

Throughout the night, a kind nurse called Tania comforts her and helps her cope with the pain. However, when Svjetlana returns months later to thank Tania, she discovers that nobody by that name has ever worked in the intensive care unit. The story ends with two unexplained mysteries: the crying baby and the nurse who apparently never existed.

7. Anna and the Man in the Corridor

- Ryszard

In March 2006 my father died. Two years later, in March 2008 my daughter Anna was born. She started walking very quickly. She was 10 months old and she was able to walk unaided within our small 40sqm flat.

What's more she became very communicative very quickly as well so around October/November 2009 when she was 19 months old she was able to communicate clearly or express her thoughts and needs etc.

Some people say that the period of time between the end of October and the beginning of November each year is the time when the border of our world and the spirit world or underworld is very thin. This is Halloween time.

Other people say that small children and animals can see ghosts or the souls of people who have died.

Before October 2009 I did not used to think much about these matters but what happened that autumn changed it completely.

At the end of October 2009 my daughter Anna started saying repeatedly that a man was standing in the corridor by the entrance door and she was afraid of him.

Of course I did not see anybody there, there was no one at the door so I tried to convince Anna that nobody was there.

Every time she mentioned it we walked to the entrance door and I tried to reassure her that there was nobody there.

These incidents became so frequent month after month that I started thinking about them more seriously, and then I remembered “what some people say” about Halloween time.

In Poland, where we lived then, it was the time of All Saints’ Day on 1 November and All Souls’ Day on 2 November.

As you can read from the above text, Anna had never seen her grandfather as he died a year before she was born and what's important is that I had never showed her a picture of my father before November 2009.

One day right after she had told me that a man again was in the corridor, I took her on my lap and we started looking through a photo album.

We began with the pictures of people she knew, and she happily named them. When we reached the photo of my father and I asked her if she knew who that person was, she became frightened, pointed towards the entrance door and said that *this* was the man she had seen so many times.

I turned pale and got goosebumps. It occurred to me that it must be true — my father had come from the afterlife because he wanted to see her. I explained to her that it was my dad who had died, and that if she ever saw him again, she didn't need to be scared because he was her grandfather and he would never hurt her — he would probably have loved her very much.

Anna is 18 now, and she told me that the last such experience happened a few years ago. One of our distant family members — let's call him "uncle" — died unexpectedly. Anna knew him very well, so she had no doubt who she saw. On the night he died (he passed away in a hospital 150 km away from Anna's house), she woke up because she noticed a person walking from the entrance door towards her room. She recognised him; he smiled and waved at her, then walked into her brother's room and finally left the house. Meanwhile, Anna tried to wake her mum, saying that "uncle came". Her mum told her off for bothering her in the middle of the night. In the morning they received a phone call saying that the uncle had died.

I asked Anna whether she had been scared that night when he came "to say goodbye". She said she wasn't — she had got used to such incidents throughout her life. I told her I would have died of a heart attack.

Ryszard from Rugby

Summary

This is a mysterious family story about Ryszard and his daughter Anna, who apparently has the ability to see people who have died. When Anna was a toddler, she repeatedly saw a frightening man standing near the entrance to their flat. One day, she identified the man in a photograph as Ryszard's father, even though he had

died before she was born and she had never seen his picture. Years later, Anna claimed to have seen another deceased relative visiting the family on the night he died. Ryszard believes these experiences may suggest that the spirits of dead relatives sometimes return to visit their loved ones. Anna, meanwhile, seems to have become so accustomed to these mysterious encounters that she no longer finds them frightening.

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8. The Password

- Liliana

The story I'm about to share with you is a true story told to me by my mother-in-law. Unfortunately, she passed away two years ago.

It happened while I was visiting my mother-in-law in Atlanta, GA. One night when I couldn´t sleep, I went to the living room to read a book.

It was around 1:00 a.m., and I was very concentrated on my book when I felt as if someone were staring at me. It was so real that I got goosebumps. I ran out from the living room and jumped into bed. I woke up my husband and told him what had happened, but his only
answer was, “don’t worry, it was my father”.

Unfortunately, I never had the chance to get to know my father-in-law.

The next day when I told my mother-in-law about my spooky experience, she assured me that it was her husband, who was a writer and had been working on a new book when he died.

After his death it was decided that another author would finish his book, but there was a problem. All his research and everything he had written so far was on his computer, and my mother-in-law didn’t know the password.

So, she spent an entire day trying to find it among his documents. She also tried different combinations on his computer, but nothing worked.

She was very frustrated by the end of the day.

That night, when she was crying in bed, she suddenly felt her husband´s presence. It was so strong that she covered her head with the sheet. A few minutes passed, and she was still under the sheet when she heard a whisper that said, “zero, five, one, nine, seven, two”. It turned out to be the correct password.

Luke, as I told you, this is a true story.

The numbers my father-in-law told his wife were the date he got his PhD. My husband and my brother-in-law also felt their father´s presence on different occasions.

- Liliana

Summary

This is a mysterious family story about Liliana and her late father-in-law, who was a writer. While visiting her mother-in-law's house in Atlanta, Liliana felt an invisible presence watching her as she read a book late at night. Her husband and mother-in-law believed it was the spirit of her deceased father-in-law. Liliana then learned that, after his death, her mother-in-law had struggled to access his computer to recover an unfinished book. One night, while crying in bed, she felt her husband's presence and heard a mysterious voice whisper six numbers. The numbers turned out to be the correct computer password, based on the date he had received his PhD. Liliana and her family believe that he may have returned from beyond the grave to help his wife and remain close to his loved ones.

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9. The Mystical Bank Account

- Pavel

When I was younger I ran a side business apart from my regular job as a logistics manager. I made investments in the stock market, some of which were strategic, some speculative, and I actively traded trying to get the maximum income.

I was quite successful and opened a special bank account to withdraw profits from the market. When I got my debit card the first weird thing happened.

The pin code on the secret list was 1924. It was the year of my father's birth, who had passed away a couple of years before.

"This is strange", I thought to myself. "What a coincidence. It looks like a reminder, a disguised message from my Dad".

But at the time I didn't ponder it much. And the really mysterious, even mystical things turned up years later.

Over the years I got tired of the stock market, of its turbulence and volatility, so I decided to stop my side hustle and dedicate myself fully to my regular job.

I received all dividends and closed all positions in stocks, and then I went with cash and made deposits in several banks.

I didn't use the bank account somehow connected to my Dad any longer. No need to withdraw money from the stock market, no need to deposit there because of low interest rates. And I couldn’t be bothered to close this account because it was free of charge to keep it. I almost forgot about it.

Fast forward several months and suddenly a strange thought started popping into my head to visit the bank office and check this account.

You know in those days on-line banking was not so popular and we used to visit bank branches for every operation.

At first I tried to throw away this silly idea, which had arrived in my mind. "What should I waste my time for?" I said to myself.

But this strange thought was obsessive, so I was almost compelled to go to the bank.

Finally I gave in and went to the bank with the idea to close this account. I handed my passport to the client manager on the counter and was absolutely shocked when he asked what I was going to do with all the money.

The word "shocked" is too weak to express my feeling at that moment. Absolutely lost, bewildered and even terrified might be better words. I was 100%

certain I had got all the money from dividends and sold shares that had arrived in that account.

Trying to keep a poker face I asked if could take this money there in the office (at that time my debit card had expired).
"Sure", answered the client manager. So, I got my cash (it was an equivalent of about 1000 dollars in roubles) and left the office.

Now with mixed feelings of joy, mystery and surprise I tried to find an explanation.

"Maybe I forgot something, some late dividends? No way.
All was calculated many times, the same with the shares.
Maybe this is some kind of bank error? Sounds unrealistic."

Reflecting over and over again I couldn't get rid of the feeling that this sort of miracle was somehow connected to my late Dad. That this was his reminder and act of support. I was not able to find any other explanation. Although I don't believe in the paranormal, modern science still can't explain many things.

But the story didn't finish there. Fast forward several years. In the year of 2015 the same compelling thought of visiting the bank started popping into my head again. I didn't close the account when I visited before. And now - the familiar obsessive thought.
"What surprise is now waiting for me?"
I found myself absolutely certain that there was something in the bank account.
“What if it’s ten thousand or even a million?", I dreamed.

So guess what? When the clerk announced the sum of about 900 dollars (equivalent in roubles) I was absolutely calm and reserved. I took the money and left the office.

You may believe in paranormal things or not but as I have already said they are phenomena in our life, which cannot be explained by modern science.

The story has not finished yet. The mystical bank account hasn't closed, is still active and one day I am going to revisit the bank when my inner voice tells me about it.

- Pavel

Summary

This is a mysterious and humorous (or perhaps just ironic) story about Pavel, a man who used to make money by investing in the stock market. He opened a special bank account and was surprised to discover that its PIN was 1924, the year his late father was born. Years later, after he had stopped investing and believed the account was empty, he suddenly felt a strong urge to visit the bank. To his amazement, he discovered approximately $1,000 in the account, with no explanation for where it had come from.

Several years later, the same mysterious feeling returned, and when he checked the account again, he found another $900. Pavel wonders whether these strange events are somehow connected to his deceased father, who might be sending him messages or offering him financial support from beyond the grave. The account remains open, and Pavel is waiting to see whether the mysterious experience will happen again.

The rest of the stories are included below…

I originally planned to read out stories 10-16 but decided not to, in order to save time.

Perhaps I can do a second part of this episode, in which I read out these other 6 stories which I also thought were great.

Would you like that?

In any case, here are the other stories which were sent to me.

10. Soldier Rescued by a Mysterious Voice

Agnieszka

It didn't happen to me.

I was during WW1. My grandpa was very young and, as my mother always described him, a very handsome man. I would say he lived in Poland but at that time Poland was occupied by three other countries.

Franek, that was my grandpa's name, was an adventurous guy. He traveled through Europe. When WW1 started he worked for a Prussian landowner. Franek had a great eye for horses and he was the landowner's favourite worker.

One day they both were getting back from a hunting trip, they met a group of Russian prisoners of war led by Prussian soldiers. One of the prisoners made an approach to Franek and begged to help him to escape. Franek was terrified and didn't react.

Later that day that Russian soldier managed to escape, and my grandpa was suspected of helping him. A German officer ordered Franek to be locked up. When the night came the landowner's daughter came to the shack where Franek was held and told him that there was an order to kill him the very next day. He asked her to bring him a coat and a pair of his boots. The girl did it and the same night Franek managed to escape.

He was a long way from home and my grandpa had to hide from German soldiers. He had no food or water. He traveled at night. Once, when he was very exhausted he spotted a little house by an arable field.
He hid in the crops and observed the house. There weren't any movements around it. So, as he was extremely tired and hungry and thirsty he made a decision to ask those people, who lived in the house for something to eat.

However, as soon as he stood up he heard a distinct voice: *escape*, it said.

Frank looked around but there wasn't anybody near. Confused, he sat down and observed the house further. Then he rose again and heard the same voice again: *escape*.

Once again he looked around and saw nobody. He decided to wait and watch. But after a while he convinced himself that after weeks of traveling and exhaustion he must have been having hallucinations. He rose again and he definitely moved towards the house, When he reached for the door knob he heard a very loud shout: *run!!!*

He ran and hid in the bushes. After a few hours he saw German soldiers getting out of the house. It was the gatehouse of the German border guard.

That is how a mysterious entity saved Franek's live.

Agnieszka

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11. Stone found on beach with baby's name

Content warning - this one contains a story about infant mortality

Guillaume/William Vianin via LEP Premium

Hello,

I had a strange experience that I can share here. It's maybe not a ghost story, but something linked to an unexplainable event.

My mother works in a daycare centre, and she takes care of children there, especially babies.

Unfortunately, one afternoon during a nap, a baby who was under her care suddenly turned pale. He stopped breathing. My mother performed emergency CPR to try to help him, but she didn't succeed. After that, the paramedics were not able to save the baby, and sadly, he died.

It was very difficult for my mother to go through that. She often thinks about the baby and the parents that lost their son.

This happened in February. Then, in July, she decided to go on vacation. She went to Italy. One day she decided to go to the beach to see the sea, and when she arrived, she chose a chair and put down her bag.

The beach was covered with small stones, and she noticed that right where she had placed her bag, there was a stone with a different color.

She picked it up, and on that stone, the baby's name was written in paint — red, yellow, and green.

That's my story. I don't know how to explain it. But it helped my mother feel that the baby is okay now wherever he is.

William

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12. Unwitting witness of a terrifying ritual

Matteo

It was 1998, I guess.

My father is driving, I'm next to him.

He's ill (heart disease, a serious one) and in the last period of his life he is attending a sort of prayer group: I'm going with him for the first time. I'm 17 and no idea of what to expect.

We arrive in a country house and a small, bearded man called Giuseppe welcomes us.

He apologises for his accent because (he explains) he spent the night in another country with a deceased man speaking an eastern european language... or something like that.

We are invited to join the other attendees in the living room. No jewels or other metal objects are allowed and we must put them in a couple of bowls on the table.

The "prayer" is about to start so apparently we must close our eyes: it's "the rule" and that's what I do.

Giuseppe starts with his prayers, one for each of the people in the room, until he says the name of a woman (can't remember the name) and that is the moment I realize it's an exorcism.

Yells, weird unnatural voices coming from the woman. Two men (maybe more, my eyes are closed) try to hold her down while she rebels against the prayers, spits and screams.

I can't say how long it lasted. As you can imagine I was petrified. The exorcism came to an end, so did the meeting.

The last one.

My dad died a few months later.

I've never seen the "healer" again and luckily I've never experienced another exorcism.

Once is enough :)

Matteo

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13. Stomping sounds and a shocking offering

Alla

It was the very first night after I came back home from a week-long holiday. I had just brought my kids to my home country to stay with my parents for the whole summer and had now come back home to an empty house.

The idea of being afraid or scared of staying on my own didn't even cross my mind. I am a confident person that enjoys the comfort of my own company.

Long story short… In the wee hours of the morning, I was woken up by some unusual stomping sounds from downstairs.

First, I thought of my cat making the noise. However, that sound wasn't anything close to the sounds that animal normally produces – a click of a cat flap she would use to go out or to come back in, or her loud meowing to let us know that she is around.

My bedroom door was closed, but I could clearly hear a frightening clatter, as if a very heavy person was running around the kitchen – a noise I never heard in our house before.

That clatter from the kitchen penetrated my ears. In a matter of seconds, it had gone down through my whole body, giving me the shivers, returning up to my mind in the shape of a horror.

I couldn't think what the source of that stomp could be. I sat up in bed, turned on the light, and listened, hoping that the noise would go away. But no, it didn't. It started sounding even louder. I could hear the banging moving upstairs, jumping along the hall, entering the room next door.

I was terrified, thinking of what would happen next, foreseeing my end, and never being able to see my children and parents again.

I stood up, I turned on the upper light, got dressed. I finally gathered myself, deciding to face my fear and to go out to see what was making that horrifying noise.

Indecisively I opened the door and to my big surprise I saw my young female cat sitting there full of excitement. My fear disappeared as if by magic, but then in the dim light breaking through from my bedroom, I noticed a ball of hair lying on the brown carpet nearby.

Being curious about what that thing was doing there, I touched it and screamed at the same second, pulling my hand back.

It was the cold body of a dead mouse!

It's hard to describe the emotions I went through. Obviously, that was my cat being happy and enthusiastic to have me back after a week of absence, so she got me a welcome home gift, which was a mouse having been chased around the house and presented as a sign of devotion and love.

The End.

Alla

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14. A wave, or the hand of a saviour?

Marcus

My name is Marcus, today I'm 43 years old and my story begins with a serious accident I had in 2013.

That year, I was at the beach and, during a dive, I hit my neck on a sandbank. I broke my neck and fractured three cervical vertebrae. At the moment of the accident, I wasn't aware of how serious it was. I was face down in the water and completely unable to move from the neck down — I was tetraplegic.

No one noticed that I was floating there, unable to move, and I started to run out of air. I was almost losing consciousness when a wave carried me to the shoreline. I clearly remember the impact on the sandbank and the lack of air, and after that I only regained consciousness when I was already on the sand.

At first, I was helped by people who were close to the water. Shortly afterwards, my mother, my wife and my sister arrived; they had been a bit further away. The lifeguards took me to hospital, where I underwent surgery. I stayed in hospital for more than 30 days. According to most doctors, the chances of me ever walking again were minimal.

Against all expectations, I recovered. Even though many medical professionals doubted it, I walked again, and the after-effects were barely noticeable. And this is where the strangest part of my story begins.

In 2019, fully recovered, I was living with my wife and our two daughters. We lived in a place where no one knew my past or about the accident I had suffered. One day, I left home to go to the bakery. Near the bakery, as usual, I saw a homeless man who was often there asking for money. Every time I saw him, he was drunk, very dirty, swearing at people, and using crutches because he had a disability in his legs.

I have never been in favour of giving money to people in that situation, as I believe it is usually spent on alcohol or drugs. That day, when I left the bakery, I had two reais

in change. I got into my car and, at that moment, the man came up to the window and asked me for the two reais.

Even though I had the money in my pocket, I said I didn't have any and started getting ready to drive away. That was when he banged on the car window and said to me, exactly these words:

"Don't lie to me and don't deny me money, because that day at the beach, when you were drowning, I was the one who pulled you out of the water. If it hadn't been for me, you would have died there."

I was completely shocked. Without saying a word, I gave him the two reais I had in my pocket and drove away.

I have always been a sceptical person — and I still am. However, to this day, I can't explain how that man knew about my accident. Even stranger is the fact that I know I wasn't rescued by anyone in the water, but by a wave that carried me to the shore. If that hadn't happened, it would most likely have ended exactly as he said.

Marcus

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15. Ghosts upstairs and the father's mistake

Aung Min

Picture this. A family of three along with a small dog just moved to a new town called Monywa (Sagaing District, Myanmar). It was in 2008 and I was 12 at the time. My father was a government officer so we had to stay only at a house that was provided by the government.

The compound we lived in was not in a remote area. However for some reasons, that compound was a bit secluded from other places and it felt strangely isolated. There were a few houses in that compound and our building was the furthest at the very end. The nearest house was about a 2-5 min walk. On a positive side, our house was only a few minutes away from the famous river in our country, the Chindwin River. A number of tall rain trees in the compound offer pleasant shade during the day, yet at night, no one dared walk beneath them. I couldn't even bring myself to look up whenever I was under them after dark.

Our house itself was a large, two-storey building. However, since it was only three people and a dog named Blacky (my brother was in Yangon, capital city of Myanmar attending university), we decided to live only on the ground floor. The upper floor was used for storage and we didn't know back then that doing that would lead to disaster.

The time we stayed at that house was mostly normal although I occasionally heard some cracking noises from upstairs at night. It was never a problem for me as my mother always reassured us that it was because of the temperature changes in the wooden structure. In the afternoons, I would often go upstairs with my dog to fetch books to read at night (I was quite a bookworm). Everything seemed normal until the day my father made a creepy mistake. Because of that, our family encountered an eerie paranormal experience and the way I see things in life changed forever.

After living there for a year, my parents held a traditional Buddhist housewarming ceremony by inviting monks to bless the house. Since we're Buddhists, it is our tradition to hold that kind of religious ceremony (as soon as possible) with the intention of cleansing the area and protecting it from evil whenever we move to a new place.

In that case, we were even a year late to do that. Just before the ceremony began, five monks entered our house and one of them said that although our house itself was clear of dark energy, he saw three "Utsa-saung" living on a rain tree near our house and said these spirits had once been my mother's older sisters in a past life.

Generally, "Utsa-saung" is a kind of spirit who was then a human in past life but due to their strong attachment to their property, certain objects or things, they become bounded to certain places or objects after death. It would be loosely translated as "Treasure Guardian" in English. They are harmless most of the time unless you provoke them or they desperately want successors to take their place so as to set themselves free.

After hearing what the monk said, my father did something that noone (including his family members) noticed. To be absolutely honest, the concepts of reincarnation and seeing spiritual beings were rocket science for a 12-year-old boy at that time. Looking back, I should have taken it more seriously.

Since that day, the atmosphere in our house shifted. We weren't physically ill but we occasionally had unsettling feelings. We became greedy and possessive of our belongings more and more. I still heard cracking noises but this time, it didn't feel the same as before. It's more like someone was slowly pacing on the floor.

Blacky (who followed me everywhere) refused to come along with me upstairs anymore. Whenever I went alone searching for books, it felt like I was being watched and also whenever I sensed that, I had goosebumps along with strange warmth that ran down my spine. I became reluctant to go upstairs alone even in daytimes.

What made it more creepy was that my parents also experienced the same goosebump thing whenever they went upstairs. This went on for a while and we thought of every possible reason to that event (except the idea of evil spirits at that time) until my brother, his then girlfriend (now beloved wife) and his female best friend came for a visit.

Since there was no available room downstairs, my father arranged for them to sleep upstairs. The first night passed while my parents and I slept downstairs and they slept upstairs. The next morning, I was surprised to find them sleeping in the living room downstairs. When I asked, my brother said that just before midnight they were preparing to sleep, they began hearing noises in the hallway. They were deadly sure it was the noise of people pacing, so they knew it was ghosts (not one but more than one ghost). They couldn't see anything but they heard it and my brother's girlfriend started crying out of fear. So my brother got mad, started shouting angrily and saying rude words to the beings he wasn't even able to see.

That was when things escalated.

After saying that, it was like those things got offended by what my brother did to them and they came running towards them. The footsteps on the floor were getting louder, faster and closer towards them. Can you imagine how frightened you would be if you were in their shoes? You couldn't see anything but you felt in your bones that those spirits were angry with you and stomping harshly towards you to do anything they were capable of. And then, the mattress they were lying in suddenly felt like someone just jumped onto it (yet nothing was visible). So, they looked at each other and suddenly ran downstairs in panic, woke up my parents, talked about the situation and they all didn't dare go upstairs. It wasn't sure whether I was lucky

or not because I slept through the entire incident. But I really wasn't happy with the result.

Only after that event, my father remembered what he had done back then. A little cultural note here: in our country, whenever we hold that kind of religious ceremony, we always invite and welcome all kinds of spirits (both good and evil) to our houses and let them listen to the monks' preaching. And then, we share our merits with them so that those spirits can become pure and go to higher places. It is the ultimate good deed in our religion. But the important thing is that you MUST formally ask them to leave the house after the ceremony so that they can go back to their places and prepare for their better journey. So to continue my story, after knowing the three sisters of my mother's past life, he welcomed those three "Utsa-saung" from the rain tree to our house that day for the ceremony. But due to his urgent business, he couldn't stay till the end of the ceremony and forgot to send them away. So, the spirits had nowhere to go but to live at our house.

Knowing the reason, my parents urgently started to arrange another ceremony by inviting Monks again to chant the "Kammavaca" in Pali Language. It's like Christian priests saying Latin words when exorcising (in movies), but instead of chasing the spirit away, it's more like doing good deeds and sharing merits with them in order for the spirits to go to better places (as I have mentioned earlier).

This time, that one monk earlier said we were lucky we arranged the ceremony not too late. Otherwise, they would make us take their place and set themselves free. After chanting "Kammavaca", the monks scattered blessed rice inside the house (especially the upstairs) for cleansing and they also sprinkled holy water outside the house for blessing and protection. We also had to wear white holy threads around our necks for protection. After that ceremony, everything went back to normal. The house felt light and our minds were lifted again. The goosebump things disappeared, I could go upstairs again without fear and Blacky was with me again. It's surprising, right? I still heard creaks at night but that sounded more like old friends who were out of touch for a while. That cracking noise sounded much more natural and familiar, sometimes even comforting. My brother and his friends went back to Yangon. We didn't have any paranormal encounters anymore. We were in that town for a total of almost three years until my dad was transferred to another town for work.

Now it's more than 15 years after that encounter and we haven't experienced anything supernatural like that since then. Yet that event left a lasting impact on all

of us in our family. To me, the boy who once doubted the existence of ghosts and the idea of reincarnation has changed forever since then. I believe I am not that little boy anymore.

This is the full story of what happened in 2008.
Thank you for your time Tr Luke and Mrs. Brooke.

Until next time.

Best regards,
Aung Min Khant

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16. Face at the window

@happy_hopeless

It was quite a while ago. I was five or six years old. Late in the evening, I was lying in my bed, half asleep. My room had a large window on one wall and a storage room door on the opposite wall. My bed was right in the middle, so I could see both the storage room door and the window.

I was dozing when I heard a strange noise, something between rustling and scratching. My drowsiness vanished immediately. I thought it might be a tree branch scratching against the glass and looked toward the window. At that moment, I vividly saw a face looking at me. But it wasn't just behind the window, it seemed to be in the distance, somehow soaring in the air. Only a face, no body attached! It's worth mentioning that our apartment was on the 5th floor, so it couldn't be just a curious passerby.

It was terrifying. I hid behind the headboard. I was almost paralyzed and couldn’t make a sound to call for adults. Then this strange noise again, I looked at the window: the same face was staring straight at me, in silence...

I don’t remember how long it lasted. sometimes I heard something, and each time I glanced at the window - there was the same fuzzy face, staring at me.

At last, I managed to pull myself together and realized that it was just my own reflection in the window. Then I fully came to my senses, opened the storage room door and discovered Persephone, one of my cats, who had somehow trapped

herself inside and was making little eerie noises while sleeping- scratching, sniffling, softly muttering 😁

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17. Young man in the house

I have been experiencing weird things for all my life. I wanted to send you short and clear one that I experienced with my family. When I was a kid I was seeing a young man in our house at nights. His body was made of lights. Imagine tiny little led lights becoming a human body. There were no eyes or any specific body part. It was only light. But I can say he has a suit and a tie. I told my mom and dad about him several times but they of course tried to comfort me that it was my imagination. He just stayed in my room, nothing more. I knew somehow, he was friendly! I saw him regularly until I was a teenager.

One summer night, my mom, my dad and my big sister were going to visit our family friends by our car and my dad was driving. We had to drive 17 km to another village and the road was intercity and winding. It was a two-way road with no divider, so cars, big buses or trucks coming from the opposite direction were on the same road. Overtaking was always risky. And it was dark because there were very few street lights. Actually, that village was bigger than ours, so we were riding that route so often.

That night when we were halfway, suddenly, our windshield fogged up. But only the windshield, not other windows. You can imagine a huge frosted glass! My dad and mom tried to clean it from inside. It didn't work! My dad reached his arm out the window to wipe it. It didn't work! He drove for a while with his head sticking out the window and he found a space on the side of the road and pulled over. They tried to clean the fog with a cloth and water, inside and outside but it didn't work! We had to stop there. It was scary for us. After about 15 minutes, the condensation on the window disappeared on its own and we continued the ride. A couple kilometres later there was a huge accident on the road, it was an intercity bus and a car involved, and there were injured people. We were shocked and we all knew it was a protection for us! But actually, I knew, somehow, deep inside, it was that young man made of light did it to protect us.

Gökçe

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18. Strange sounds

This happened when I was in my 11th year at school (the last year at school in Ukraine), studying for my graduation exams at around 4 in the morning. My mum had been away for around a fortnight, so noone would tell me off for not going to sleep. I was already dozing off by the way and contemplating taking a break from the work. I even remember that I was studying Ukrainian literature for the exam, and even remember the novel I was analysing, as I heard a knock on the wall just behind me. That wall was between my and my mom's room, and once again, the entire apartment was empty, it was only me who stayed at home for the sake of studying.

I remember the feeling that my heart misses a beat and I froze, when after roughly 5 seconds I heard another knock on the same wall. Unsurprisingly, there wasn't even a sign of sleepiness after that in me, my body was trembling as if I was dying in cold. I could not fall asleep obviously.

In approximately an hour (that is around five or half five in the morning) I heard some hissing sound, coming from the corridor, which terrified me even more, and the sound was quite intense (never had I realised I would get disgustingly scared so easily). I was fighting the urge to make sure everything was alright, I wanted to only stay in my room. Eventually my anxiety about some possible mysterious hazard in the corridor took over me and I grabbed my phone with the torch on and sneaked out of my room. I think it took me an eternity to get to the source of the noise, which turned out to be just bloody burst pipes in the kitchen (the water pressure was quite intense tho and very soon the kitchen was flooded). I shut off the water and cleaned the kitchen, it was alright in the end, later we called the plumber and he repaired everything, but the odd thing about it is how the knocks prevented me from sleeping, since I would have been asleep and would have not woken up to the burst pipe if it hadn't been for the knocks. I do dread the thought I could have woken up at around noon in a pond, not a flat.

Five years have passed since then, I still have no idea where the knocks came from and if it was just coincidence (I do absolutely accept scepticism about it!)

- Liza

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19. A sister's final plea

Now, I'm going to tell you the true story that happened 20 years ago.

My youngest sister died on the 3rd of April 2006. She was terribly ill. We literally had to fight to get her hospitalised because she didn't want to leave our home. The night before we were told she died, I saw her face right in front of me. Don't forget that I'm blind, I can't see anything. But I saw her face clearly. I felt like she wanted to tell me something before leaving this world, something really important. She didn't speak at all, but I truly thought she was asking me to take care of her son. I did it, I did the best I could. He's ok even if his life wasn't easy sometimes. He is working honestly, he loves cars and he is a good musician. He has a lot of friends.

Many years after that, I saw my sister even when I was awake. She seemed to be pleased or to be giving me advice.

I know it's not my imagination, it really happened, I have no doubt about it.

- Hafid

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20. A ghostly sighting

@peace-e1k6u
There were 6 people of us sitting in the living room watching TV. Suddenly, I saw a white cloud passing through in front of us and entered into bedroom rapidly. I asked others whether they saw it too. Some said they saw a white smoke, one said it looked like a white cloth, and one said it was a black long hair women who with a white dress. This was the only time I could saw this kind of abnormal phenomenon by eyes, mostly I could only sense their energy.

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21. Wake up

@cat-iv3tf • 3 hours ago
My girlfriend and I took a trip once with no plan. We got to our destination around 9:00 PM and found a nearby hotel to stay at. It seemed to be owned by a Chinese family , there were a lot of Chinese decorations around the place.
We were pretty tired, so we went straight to sleep. Sometime in the morning, I woke up feeling my bed shake. I thought it might be an earthquake, so I checked the water bottle next to me, but the water was calm.

I figured I was just imagining things and went back to sleep. Then, out of nowhere, I heard a woman's voice right by my ear say, "Wake up." I jumped up and looked over at my girlfriend. Her eyes were wide open, staring at me. She heard it too , I know I didn't imagine it.
After that, nothing happened.

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22. Jinn

@abdelwahed-zaki • 5 hours ago

I believe that when people die, they move on to another world to face judgment for their deeds. I don't think they get stuck here.
To be honest, I don't lean toward the idea that strange happenings are just tricks of the mind, but rather, I think they come from beings called Jinn.
They are creatures more advanced than us, live in a higher dimension overlapping our world, from where they see us, while we can't see them, unless they choose to lower themselves into our dimension and take on a form we can notice.

Imagine how easy it is for us, as 3D creatures, to interact with a 2D world on paper. For them, entering our world is probably just as simple.
For some reason, some of them seem particularly drawn to certain places in our material realm, and I think they enjoy tricking us by acting like ghosts or aliens, exploiting human ignorance, fear, and curiosity.
You might ask, why do they pop in and out like that?
Well, I think only a small handful, maybe the insane ones :), bother to come down here and waste their time messing with people, while most Jinn are busy with their own lives, same as us.
It's a perspective I don't hear often, but it helps to make sense of all the weird stories.

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23. Girl from a tragic past

@くり-k7l • 3 hours ago
Hello, thank you for sharing insightful experience, both of you.
Please let me share my experience in return to this Podcast.

I'm living in Tokyo, Japan, where I was born and raised also.

One day, when I was sleeping, I just felt like someone was grabbing my leg and trying to pull me out of my bed.
Unfortunately, I had experienced some ghost and psychic things already, so I realized that this was another ghost I had, by uncomfortable sensation of touch.
Then, I started to concentrate to drive the ghost out from my room and life. In the meditation, I saw a very little girl, and I knew the girl probably died in the war, by intuition. Even if the ghost was a little girl, I had to outcast her from my room, or life.
So I just charged aggressive energy in myself, to inflict it to her. Few moments later, two adults appeared in my meditation. The moment they came out, I felt somehow they were who had been watching the girl, one of them was her own grandfather.
Then, the old man talked to me.
"This girl was killed in a tragedy. How could you attack this little sacrifice? I guide her to go away now, so just let it go" he said.
The sense of presence of ghost had vanished immediately.

As you know, Japan was one of core members of WW2 actors. So at near the end of WW2, Tokyo was shattered by American bombers. More than One hundred and ten thousand of people were killed, It was indiscriminating bombing so no matter if they were children or elderly.

P.S. I know so many people make their ghost stories up. But this is completely true experience, to me at least.
So it can be felt so special to me, to walk foreigners through this experience in English-once the language of the enemy.

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24. A magnet for paranormal events

My five friends and I spent some days at my friend's house in a village during the Christmas holidays. During those days some strange and horrifying things happened… (I have to say that everything happened without the influence of alcohol or drugs! jaja)

It's important to say that one of my friends is like a magnet for paranormal events… In his own house (not the house we were), he usually hears noises, voices, screams, cupboard doors opening… and his cat is always looking at a particular spot. Knowing this, we were always joking about whether something might happen to us while we were with him. And, in fact, some things happened.

One afternoon my friends and I were in the kitchen while another friend was upstairs, fast asleep in his room because he had been working that morning. All of a sudden, we heard him running downstairs. His face was completely pale, he looked terrified. He said: has anyone touched my elbow twice while I was sleeping in my bedroom? We hadn't, obviously. We said: are you joking? He didn't, unfortunately. His face looked like he had seen a ghost. We couldn't accept that this was really happening. We were completely alone in that house… Then, we looked at my "magnet friend" and his face was pale too. At that moment, we realized this was serious stuff, and without saying anything, in one fell swoop, we took our coats and ran out of the house… we didn't know where to go, we were shocked, but, one of us proposed to go inside my friend's car. We stood there I don't know for how long… My friend who had had the experience began to cry, we were all shaking and debating what to do… we didn't want to return there, but we had to. So, we decided to return, took all the mattresses, put them all together and slept in the living room. Since then, none of us return to the bedrooms upstairs.

More strange things happened. In front of the living room there was a bathroom and the door was open, we heard a noise inside and I stood up and I saw that a toothbrush that previously was in a pot, at that moment was on the bathroom sink. The toothbrush had jumped from the pot to the bathroom sink, and we all heard that!. My friend said to us that during the night, she heard that something fell down from somewhere in the bathroom and we saw the next morning that a toiletry bag had jumped from the shelf and it was laying on the floor…

Another experiences I remember, and the most terrifying in my opinion, was that we heard from the living room that something had fallen in the room next to the kitchen where the washing machine was. That door was always closed. When we opened the door, we saw our hats and costumes from the previous New Year's Eve party (previously had been put on the washing machine) were scattered on the floor. The strangest thing was that there wasn't a window in that room, and the washing machine wasn't working, so, how could that had happened? Furthermore, another day, we were in the kitchen talking and my friend told us that he was feeling uncomfortable because he was noticing a presence in that room, and immediately afterwards, a human whistling sound was clearly heard coming from there…we ran out of the kitchen as fast as we could.

My friends and I always talk about this and we can't make an explanation of what happened. I think all these experiences are called poltergeist, and as far as I know, I

think it's related to human mental action. I don't know, but since all these happened I believe in the paranormal experiences.

Ana

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25. Father's stories

Although I would have loved to win a book by Anna, I cannot share a paranormal experience (and I am grateful that I have never experienced something ghostly, because it really would have unsettled me). However, I like imaginative ghost stories and I am a big fan of the Harry Potter books.

However, I remember the stories my father often had told us. As a child, he spent much time in the kitchen of a small restaurant run by his mother in East Prussia (today's Poland), listening to the kitchen maids as they shared stories and sang songs, often telling of paranormal experiences or of the gruesome end of poor innocent girls.

And my grandmother, displaced from her homeland and later found by my father in a refugee camp with the help of the Red Cross, regularly invited other displaced women from East Prussia for coffee and meringue and they exchanged strange stories about apparitions of the war dead, while I played on the kitchen floor.
What I remember, and it is not paranormal, is the strong impression of my father, sitting in his favourite armchair, after he had died.

I found it really difficult to write this from scratch and had to look up some words and expressions. And the English punctuation is a mystery for me, almost „paranormal".

I love listening to your Podcast and the vocabulary previews are really helpful. Thank you for your great work. As a former teacher I know, that this is time consuming. And I admire your empathetic and non-judgemental way of conducting conversations.
Best wishes also to Anna. I like her books very much!
Susanne

26. A visitation

@EgorSheko-q2o •
It happened a few months ago, and to be honest, I still can't fully explain it. I'm not someone who believes in paranormal things—I usually look for logical explanations first. But this… felt different.

I was home alone one night, studying late. Everything was completely quiet, and I remember checking the time—it was exactly 2:17 a.m.

A few seconds later, I heard a soft knocking sound. Not from the door, but from inside the room. Three slow knocks. Then silence.

At first, I assumed it was just the pipes or maybe the walls reacting to temperature. That would be the rational explanation. But then it happened again—this time closer.

I stood up and looked around carefully, trying to stay calm and think logically. There was nothing unusual. No open windows, no movement, nothing that could explain the sound.

Then I noticed something strange—the door, which I clearly remembered closing, was slightly open.

I'm sure I closed it.

At that moment, I felt that something wasn't right. Not fear exactly, but a strong sense that I was not alone.

I walked to the door and opened it slowly. The hallway was empty. Completely silent.

And then, behind me, in the room, I heard the same three knocks again.

I turned around immediately—but there was nothing there.

After that, everything went quiet. No more sounds, nothing moved.

I tried to explain it logically—maybe I was tired, maybe I imagined part of it. But the timing, the pattern, the door… it all felt too precise to be random.

Since then, nothing like that has happened again.

But I still remember that night clearly—and I'm not entirely sure I want to know the explanation

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27. Guardian angel?

@CarolinaCalderon-x6n
My sister traveled from Germany to Colombia and she stopped in Paris for a couple of hours, She left her stuff in a locker provided for the airport, and she received a key. When she needed to get the plane, she looked for the key to open the locker but she couldn't find it and she told the lady who was responsible for the lockers, and the lady told my sister: "a few days ago came a man, very tall and blonde and left a pair of keys with me" my sister asked if she could try it. The lady gave the keys to her and the locker opened... My sister was able to take the plane and she is sure that his man was her guardian angel to help her, she needs to really take her stuff and not miss the plane.

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28. Creepy old man

@h.i.j.xi.l •
This is a creepy story that is really happening to me.
I think it started maybe last year. When I walk alone in my neighbourhood. I almost always run into a creepy old man. He has trouble walking, and he always drags one leg. He always keeps his right hand in his pocket. He appears at any time, day or night. He wasn't there a moment ago, but when I look up, he is already there, walking toward me and dragging his leg. And there is never anyone else around. It's always just me and him. It really scares me. I wonder if I am the only one who can see him. 😨😱

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29. Mysterious passing

@ayemoh1011 •
Hello Luke!

I'm from Myanmar where Mother Hsu (Aung San Hsu Kyi) was born.

It happened to me when I started taking my first posting as a middle school teacher on the outskirts of the city, which is almost two-hour drive by bus. So I used to wake up early, prepare for work and walk to the bus stop every weekday.

One morning, around 5 a.m, my dad sent me to the stop because sometimes the light went out in our country at that time, even in the city. On the way to bus stop, I came across a man walking towards us, then he passed over me and my dad. I was checking him if he was the man living in our street, who passed away the day before.

So I looked into his face and his body, but nothing was different like the real him except his new hair cut. His outfit was also the usual wearing style: patterned shirt and longyi and the whole thing looked like the real person, not like a ghost (the ones I have seen in the movies 😂). That made me unclear that the news he left the world was a truth or fake. After watching him pass, I asked my dad if he also saw him.

He said, "Yes, I did. Exactly like him." My dad's answer made me shocked. I was curious to know about him and so I kept on asking my dad. "Does he have a twin?" Because I just wanted to have an evidence for his new hairstyle to relieve my suspicion. (Maybe this man is his twin.) But my dad was also unsure about that. When I reached the corner of the street, I looked him back again and saw he was peeping one of his friend's houses, probably to say 'Good Morning' because he was such a sociable person.

Then, we also hurried to the bus stop and I took the bus to work. On my return home, the news I heard puzzled me! The truth was that he had no twin and he really passed away the day before.

If so, whom did I meet this morning? Ghost or who else?

Thanks for reading my real experience ❤

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30. Room 1545

@itzme4071 • 4 hours ago
Hi Luke, . Im a nurse in India and while working in ICU s with ventilator patients(who breathe just because of the support of the ventilators) i always feels the presence of the souls around the place wanting to get free from the body . I don't know is it just my imagination but i saw shadow of the person just standing helpless.

There was a room 1545 when i worked in surgical ward believed to be haunted because patient call bell used to ring during night shift when it is vacant and many times maintenance was called to fix it. Moreover critical patients admitted to that room always ended up with death-care , not a discharge. Entire hospital staff knew about it. I even heard baby crying from that room at night when it was vacant.
I have no explanation to describe it but i believe what saw, felt and heard .

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31. Discarded clothes, and what is that behind the curtain?

Vicky

Now it's time to tell my spooky stories. I have two stories to tell you. Both of the stories happened when I was a primary school student.

The first one happened when I lived with my grandma from my mother's side in the countryside. We had a few neighbors. There was a piece of discarded child clothes in the front of one of the neighbors' yard used to shroud something.

It's very common for us to reuse discarded clothes for purposes like this. So there's nothing abnormal about that until one afternoon, I was playing in front of our house and suddenly saw a child wearing that piece of clothes lying there shrouding that something.

The child, who was chubby and roughly 1 year or 2 years old, didn't make any sounds and nether move. I found that when you were at your most scary moments of your life, you actually did not have any sounds in you to scream. So I surely didn't scream. I just froze and panic. My heart suddenly felt like it stopped beating. I couldn't breathe (at least not for a very long time). There's no air coming out of my nose. Suddenly lots of sweat appeared in my palms.

And after what felt like a lifetime passing, I blinked my eyes once and only once. The child was gone. Only that piece of clothes remained. And I never saw that child again. Every time when I saw that piece of clothes, the image of that child always found a way to pop into my brain and haunt me for the rest of the day. This experience was ever only kept in my brain and not anyone else's. Until now when I am writing this email and you are reading this email, Luke.

The second story happened when I lived with my grandpa from my father's side. It happened on a Saturday. My grandpa was sleeping upstairs. Me and my sister, we stayed up really late that night (I vaguely remember we stayed late till midnight) watching TV downstairs. After we finished watching, we went upstairs to shower and get ready for sleep. It's all very quiet at night. But when we entered into the lobby on the second floor and the minute we switched the light on, then came that kind of noise of plastic bags being crumpled toughly. And we also found that the curtain on the right was not flatly attached to the window like the left one. Instead, it's bulging weirdly. Our wild guess at the time was that there's someone behind that curtain balling those plastic bags in his/her hands. OMG isn't that crazy?

Maybe it's because of overwhelming fear or stress or whatever, we just didn't come to think of waking our grandpa and letting him, a fully grown and strong adult, handle this frightening situation. No, we two extremely stupid idiots decided to take a shower first. Now looking back on, I just can't believe how lucky we were about the fact that we weren't murdered right away on the spot. After we came out of the bathroom, we found that the curtain became flatter and whatever behind the curtain seemed not there anymore. I then mustered all the courage I had in me to pull open the curtain with a fan being my so-called weapon to defend myself.

Guess what? Nothing. Totally nothing. I have talked about this with my sister in February this year while going for a walk with her. Even to this day, we still couldn't be sure if that was really a person behind that curtain (You know, it could be a ghost or something), and if it's indeed a person, who he/she was, why they were there and what had happened during the time when we were taking that shower. Just so many unanswered questions. If you really ponder over these questions, your hair on your neck will just stand on end just like mind did when I was writing these questions down.

Those are my two stories Luke. Thank you for spare a moment in your busy day to read this comment.

Vicky Chen

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32. The splits

In 1995 in a small village in Ukraine, in summer time my friends and I saw a witch. It was a middle of the summer when pagan's Holliday is celebrating, which calls Ivan the swimmer. At midnight we were walking through a small forest between the village and a beach on the bank of the river Dnipro. Suddenly, right in front of us appeared something in white clothes, and we all saw a girl in a white dress, she was pretty and with pale face. We stopped due to unexpected performance, looking at her beauty, meanwhile she whispered something and did the splits. I was so shocked, so I couldn't see on it and I closed my eyes for a second and when I opened it she had already gone. My friends saw the same. I know that you asked not to use AI, but I used it to create a picture of that girl for your consideration. Hope you will find it interesting.
Stepan
Canada.

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33. Dying light

@paolatrentadue3034 •

Hello Luke, I would have a brief paranormal experience to tell that occurred to me when my mum was passing away, unfortunately. I don't know if this could be the case to share this personal experience but I would like that you Anna could judge this unusual event. Let's start...
It was a Sunday afternoon,I was sitting on the sofa and my mum was next to me. Her breath was heavy, her eyes were moist, and her hands were thin and started to become cold. I held tight her hands while my loved dog was laid on the floor close to us. I don't clearly remember how long we stay in this scenario but I clearly remember that when my mum exalted the last breath and played her head on my shoulder, I saw a light that looked like that of a candle floating in the living room. All of sudden the dog barked at the light and came closer to my mum. But I wasn't afraid of seeing this light even if the shutters were closed. I realised that this light could be my dad's soul who passed away six years before, so I perceived a sense of peace and quiet because I knew that my mum was reaching another world. Maybe my dad had come to take her away.... This event lasted only a handful of second but it really left a remarkable mark in my mind and in my heart. I suppose that now my parents live in a better place...

Sorry if I have been a bit paranoid but I strongly believe that it was like this.
Paola

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34. Oh..Oh

Tanya

At first, I heard in the middle of the night someone in the next room was deliberately making a noisy sound and was sighing heavily: “Oh, oh…” And then the shuffling steps started moving towards the door of my room. Right in front of it, the footsteps stopped. A few seconds later, the door creaked open slightly,y and a faint ray of light appeared on the floor and the wall. My heart was pounding. I could not open my eyes or turn over to the other side in my bed to see who this was! I was frozen with fear. I felt someone was watching me and was groaning. Finally, I opened my eyes. Trembling with horror, I slowly turned back. And then I saw the source of the sound. It was a very old, tiny man with a gray beard and long gray hair. He wore a long white shirt, belted with a leather belt. He held a candle in his short hands. I immediately recognized him - Hutnik, house spirit. I quickly asked him: “For good or bad?” He groaned and, in a creaky voice, answered: “Help me first”. Thirty years ago, I was seven years old… I vividly remember this day. Warm, sunny summer day

in a small old village next to a river. An old wooden home with a brick roof and a chimney. My grandma and I were sitting on a bench near the stove and drinking tea, enjoying the silence. Suddenly, it was broken by a rustling, unsettling sound from under the stove. I was scared and moved closer to my granny. She hugged me and was comforting me: “You don’t have to be afraid, sweety! It is our Hutnik. He has no intention to do something bad to us if we are doing good about home and him”. We went outside and suddenly, through the window, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a huge black cat was sitting next to the stove; however, my grandma and neighbours did not own any pets like this, and he was too big to be real. After I glanced out the window again, the cat had disappeared. I racked my brain to work out if it was just my imagination? I shook my head to get rid of the illusion. Later in the evening, when we were walking along the river and soaking in the gentle rays of the evening sun, I asked my grandma about this vision and she explained to me that Hutnik sometimes can turn into a cat, but usually he looks like an old, small man in white clothes. I asked my granny if I could call and see him. She answered that, unfortunately, it is impossible; only if he himself wants to show up, I will be able. At that time, I could wonder whether his appearance was a good or bad omen. I was extremely interested in stories about such supernatural entities, so I begged my grandma to tell me more about him. And she told me several legends about Hutnik, while we were strolling along the river. I remembered grandma like this: kind and wise, a beautiful woman, her voice sounded soothing, the wind ruffled her gray hair. I didn’t know that I would return to this village, this home, only after many years later — and if it weren't for that incident, I don't know when I would have come here again. I sat on the edge of the bed. “How can I help you?” – I asked him, feeling calmer since I understood who it was. For me, Hutnik was like a relative about whom I was told a lot, but I had never met before. He answered that he remembered me, the kindness and hard work of my granny. He had cared a lot about Grandma's home, but now I needed to give him a hand, and Hutnik started a story: “Many years ago, when your grandma died, the home was sold, and new owners settled here. But surely you know this. Anyway, they did not respect me and did not take good care of the home. That's why I broke their dishes and would bang pots at night. The new family, blatantly obvious, wasn't happy with this situation, so they called a wise woman. She told me with the help of herbs that I should leave this house, so I left the home in the form of the black cat…” I was listening, holding my breath, but when Hutnik mentioned a black cat, I exclaimed: “I remember you! I saw a big black cat in my childhood!” Oh, oh…Yes, it was me. So, I had to leave the home and began to travel to find a new home. " - Hutnik continued. He told me that he had travelled for many years as a cat, but could not find his family or his home. He would eat whatever kind of food people gave him and would sleep in derelict

buildings. However, Hutnik is a magical creature; he had to admit that it was not an easy journey, since not all people had bright souls, and there were too many cars in cities. Be it long or short, he had come to the city where I live now. He felt like he was closer to his family. “How did you manage to find my home in this big city?” - I asked Hutnik, surprised. -” Did you use some magic for this? ” “Ooooh, no. There is nothing magical about it. I was walking around the city and came across you. You remind me of your grandmother when she was young,” – he answered and smiled warmly. After our meeting, Hutnik followed me, and he found out where I live. After our meeting, Hutnik had been watching me for several days to understand whether my soul was bright. As I can conclude – yes, since he is sitting right in front of me. I need to say that it was heartwarming to discover, in such an unexpected way, that presumably I am a good person. “I really appreciate that you considered that I have a bright soul. This is important to me! But what kind of help do you need?” - I decided to clarify. “Oh, ohh… You are right. Let's get to the point. When I left home, I forgot my ball of thread. It binds me to the old home. I need to take it back to be able to live in your home. Now I am between two homes," - Hutnik explained. I immediately decided to help. Firstly, because I believe that we should help everyone who needs help along the way. Also, it is exciting to have a kind, magical entity at home that will take care of the home, isn't it? So we decided to go to the village on the first morning train. I hoped that the old home was still standing and had not collapsed. I said thoughtfully, looking at Hutnik: "Hmm... maybe it would be better if you turned into a cat again, as people are still not used to seeing a magical creature like you." He agreed, and in the blink of an eye, a black cat appeared in his place. Only the multicoloured lights hinted that magic had happened. “Can I hold you in my hands?" - I asked Hutnik respectfully. The cat nodded, and we started our journey. I hoped I would remember the station and the way to the village correctly. The people who were also on the train that early could never have guessed why a middle-aged woman with a cat in her hands was travelling outside the city in the early morning. However, they were busy with their own concerns and problems and hardly paid any attention to me. I looked out the window and thought about how the landscape had changed since I was last here — the forest had partly been cut down and replaced by housing estates. The city had inevitably expanded its borders. It took two hours to get to the village. It took two hours to get to the village. Finally, Hutnik and I got off the train. As soon as I stepped onto the platform, emotions overwhelmed me. When my beloved grandma passed away, I could not come to say my last goodbye, because I was far away. Now I could visit the place so strongly connected with my memories of her. The cat suddenly jumped down from my hands and started walking along the road, looking back to see if I was following him. He walked so confidently that I was sure he remembered the way. Soon, we

approached the familiar village. The smells and sounds were so evocative! Many buildings were tumbledown, however my grandma's home was in good condition. Undoubtedly, someone was living here. I tried to open the gate in the fence. It was locked. Hutnik jumped over the fence, turned into his usual appearance, and opened the front door. But a new challenge appeared — how could we get into the house? It seemed Hutnik answered my silent question: "Ohh, ohh… Now it is time for magic." He approached the wall and squeezed through it into the house. For a few seconds, I was frozen, mouth agape and eyes wide, but then I came closer to the window and, as I had in childhood, looked through it. Unexpectedly, I saw two black cats on the floor instead of one. They were standing in front of each other with bristling fur and puffed-up tails, glaring at each other from beneath their brows. One cat held a ball of red thread in his mouth. I was surprised! The ball of thread was preserved, and Hutnik found it. I could guess who was one cat, but another one? While I was thinking about this question, the sound of an approaching car could be heard in the distance. I wondered if the new owners were coming. So I hid around the corner of the house and waited. The car stopped next to the gate, and a man and a woman got out. They both wore hats and large sunglasses covering half their faces. Rather suspicious, wouldn't you say? They opened the front door, and two large black cats immediately ran out. I could swear they were arguing over the ball of red thread. I imagined the dialogue going something like this: "This is my ball of thread!" "No, leave it alone!" I felt it was time to act. I quickly ran out from around the corner of the house, ignoring the astonishment of the owners, who had not yet recovered from the sudden appearance of the cats.I grabbed the cat with the ball of red thread and started running as fast as I could. Surprisingly, the other cat did not lag behind. We all ran together to the train station just in time. The train was arriving at the station. Most likely, there was some magic involved. The cats and I jumped onto the train. I took a seat, holding one cat and the ball of thread in my arms. The second cat settled down next to me. And in such company, we arrived in the city and made it home. As soon as we entered the apartment, the second cat turned into Hutnik. I was puzzled and asked him: "Hmm. Who is this cat?" Hutnik answered: "Ohhh, I have no idea. He just played with my things. I was happy that I didn't need to spend hours looking for the ball of thread." The cat in my arms said only: "Meow!" At that moment, I woke up and saw that two black cats were looking at me.

Tanya

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35. The birthday / Locked in glass

The birthday

It was a chilly, windy evening, and it was getting dark as I walked home. I was going through my village's narrow, winding streets when I began to hear creaking footsteps on the old cobbles. Then I felt that someone was staring at me. I didn't know why or where it was coming from. I just felt it. Maybe it was just my imagination, or the long shadows of the street lamps flickering in the wind. But the rhythm of the footsteps kept getting closer, and the feeling of a piercing gaze became stronger. I turned around, but there was no one there. The more frightened I became, the faster I walked, until I broke into a run.

I ran and ran until I reached my house, crossed the garden path, rushed inside, and quickly closed the shutters and locked the door. I leaned against the wall, frozen with fear.

I gathered all my courage and looked through the peephole… Luckily, it was only my neighbour. She was quietly passing by with a huge Minion-shaped balloon for her daughter's birthday party, wearing very creaky shoes. I should have felt calm… but I wasn't. I felt as if the Minion balloon's eyes were staring at me.

For a moment, I thought it was only my imagination. But then she walked past my house, turned the corner, and disappeared from sight. The balloon, however, didn't follow her. It stayed there, floating in the air.

I looked closer and realised that it no longer looked like a decoration. It looked like a huge, strange, distorted eye. It was watching me. When I looked again, the balloon was gone.

The next morning, I met my neighbour and asked if her daughter had liked the balloon for her birthday. She looked confused and said: "Birthday? Which birthday?".

Christina.

Locked in Glass

When I was a child, my parents and I used to spend our holidays on an island just off the coast of our hometown. One year, we rented a seaside cottage. It had a little terrace on the first floor, and from there, a spiral staircase led to a sort of tower room with glass walls and a glass ceiling. The space was slightly run-down, cluttered with old objects, and always felt cold. I often stayed there, playing or watching the sea through the dull, grime-covered glass. Inside, there was a faded wicker settee with colourful cushions and a heavy wooden storage bench that was stubbornly locked. Scattered around the room were coffee tables, rusty garden tools, old notebooks, and hanging pots filled with flowering succulents.

One afternoon, I wanted to play with my favourite doll. I loved it, with its bright red dress and a huge wide-brimmed sun hat, because even my darling doll had to be safe from the sun. I looked everywhere, but I couldn't find it. Still, I was sure I had seen it earlier that day. The last place I checked was the upstairs room, but it wasn't there either.
A few days later, one evening, a group of painters arrived on large barges at the canal harbour and set up an exhibition along the bank. As my parents and I strolled among the paintings, I stopped, drawn to one canvas.
It depicted a room cut by a shaft of sunlight through the clear glass. There was a neat wicker settee with colourful cushions, coffee tables, polished gardening tools, notebooks, and hanging pots with small flowering succulents. There was a girl about my age. She was kneeling in front of an open wooden storage bench. Among the toys, there was a doll with its red dress and a wide-brimmed sun hat. It was my doll.

Christina.

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36. Three slashes

@ИринаШарова-б8м •
I would like to share my real story about strange things in this world . I was born in the Soviet Union . The church has always been separated from the state, and party members, as well as Komsomol members, were forbidden from going there.
80-90% of all high school students were Komsomol members. Not being a Komsomol member was considered shameful. We were taught that the church is evil and that no otherworldly , mythical forces exist and that all of this is fiction. I firmly believed what we were taught at school and university. But time passed. I grew up, got married, had children and we bought an apartment. We bought an apartment in a nine-story building. By this time the Soviet Union had already collapsed, but I still didn't believe in God or mysticism.

One room in the apartment was very strange, it was in this room that the children for some reason kept falling, hitting their foreheads, hitting themselves very painfully... This particular room was the children's room and the children were supposed to sleep there. The girl was 2 years old, the boy was 4 years old. They often came running into my husband and I's bedroom at night and said they were scared.

One such night, they both came running and lay down in our bed. I felt very uncomfortable and cramped, so I left the children to sleep with their dad and went

to the children's room. And what I experienced that night was truly a night of horror. I fell asleep right away, but woke up because someone or something was sitting on my legs, below my knees, and my bed was rocking. I couldn't move, I couldn't scream, it was a terrible feeling of fear. I lay with my eyes open and for the first time in my life I asked God for help. I didn't know any prayers, I just asked in my own words and waited for the morning. When it began to get light, I felt that my legs were free, I could move, I got out of bed, not understanding what it was; a nightmare, a bad dream or the truth. When I went into the bathroom, I saw in the mirror that three slashes and the letter Z were scratched on one of my cheeks, and the same design, only larger, was scratched on my leg above the knee. I didn't have big nails at that time, so I couldn't scratch myself, and it's simply impossible to make absolutely identical designs on my leg and cheek. That same day, my husband and I went to church and bought crosses for the whole family and several icons . We closed that room and moved the children to another one. And then we looked for information, we looked for people to cleanse this room of negative energy. I was a skeptic, but life made me believe that we know too little about this world.

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37. Dancers disturbed

@kyisin8397 •
Hi Luke! This is Kyi Phyu from Myanmar.

So, I live in Mandalay, one the largest cities in my country. But when I was young, I used to spend my summer holidays in another city within my country ; Bago which is a bit smaller city. And there was a house right beside of my house which is really old and there used to live 2 people, both females; an old lady and her niece. The old lady was quite old and her niece was in her 20s I think at that time. It was a two-storey house and they both live in upper storey. I loved to play at their house occasionally as a child since the old lady often offers snacks. And one day, she started telling me a strange story about a paranormal thing. She said, she dreamed an unusual dream that a blurry image is begging them not to move out. So, at that time, they were thinking of moving out obviously. She told me that on that day. Then, when I visited her another time, she told me that she had been having that kind of strange dream for the whole week and what different is that every night, the dream becomes more real and intense. It was like actually happening in real life. She dreamed that the person trying to stop them from moving started throwing stuffs in her house like TV remote and water bottles and clocks. She couldn't think of who the person is and why he/she is doing that particular thing. And the next day

when she woke up, stuffs were all around the house exactly as she dreamed. It was so weird. A couple months later, they moved out.

Then second owner lends the house to a group of young people who use the building for practising dancing. Probably, dancers. And things started to get worse after that. Out of curiosity, me and my cousins sometimes go watch their dance and one time they called us to ask is the building haunted. We didn't say anything as we didn't know much about it either. They said they've seen an unusual figure lied beside one of their people while sleeping staring that person. Also, a few dreamed that someone is telling them to get out because the person in the dream doesn't like noise and they are making him/her annoyed. Like the old lady experienced, one day when they woke up stuff were scattering all around the house. After a few days, the dance group disappeared and their possessions were unpacked. Some said they ran away. Nobody knew what they experienced the night before they ran away.

That was it. I personally think the ghost there was not a bad person though. He/she just want to live in the building peacefully and the first owner meets his expectation; letting him alone. And that's why, he didn't want them to move out. Now that building was used as a dormitory. Nothing mysterious happened so far.

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38. Shadow At 2 AM

Hello Luke! My name is Misda, from Indonesia. This story happened when I was in high
school. Since junior high school, I have stayed with my aunt. Everything was fine until I was
in 11th grade. At that time, I tried to study hard for a competition, and around 2 AM I woke up
and suddenly saw a very big shadow. I don’t even know what it was, but it made me feel
shocked, especially because I had just woken up. Unfortunately, I only saw it for a second, and
when I blinked my eyes, it was gone. I don’t know what is that. It made me very scared. So I
decided to sleep again until 5 AM.
When I woke up at 5 AM, I realized I had a fever. So I didn’t go to school because of it. When
I felt better, I went to school again, but I felt different in my body. I felt exhausted even though

I didn't do anything. The strange thing was I ate so much because I felt hungry all the time. I
ate before going to school, during break time I ate two plates of rice, in the evening I also ate,
and one portion was not enough. When I got home, the first thing I did was eat again. Even at
midnight, I woke up just to eat again. This happened day by day.
A few days later, I felt very exhausted at school. My teacher noticed it. Then he wrote
something on the whiteboard, and I suddenly lost consciousness. A second before I fainted,
my friend saw a black shadow in the corner of the room. I don't even know what it was.

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39. Three scratches / Serenity

When I was little, I used to saw things. And it was absolutely normal to me. But at the same time, I felt fear of unknown and inexplicable. I constantly saw clots of energy, similar to columns of thick fog in the houses. I was sure that I could heal and remove headaches by laying on hands. Most likely, my grandparents played along. :) I could also hold metal objects (spoons, coins, needles) in the palm of my hand in an almost horizontal position. It's strange that no one had an idea to filmed it. I remember parents even took me to some mediums. Now I'm sure they were definitely charlatans.
Two strange things happened to me in childhood, which I remember most of all. The first story happened to me when I was about 8 years old. I was on vacation in the small village at the apartment of my grandparents and I had a terrible dream. I dreamed of a monster with glowing red eyes, round, like buttons. And this monster attacked me in my dream and scratched my chest. His hands were like the hands of Wolverine from X-Men - with long claws. I woke up in horror and saw these eyes a meter away from me. They looked at me without blinking for a couple of seconds and then disappeared. I remember that I couldn't sleep anymore that night. In the morning, while changing my clothes (and I always slept in warm pajamas), I found three scratches exactly where the monster left them on me in my dream. Above my left breast, long and thin.
The second story happened much later, I was about 12 years old. I was alone in our apartment and it was the afternoon. I was sitting in my room at the table and doing my homework. Thinking about the answer, I tore my eyes away from my textbook

and looked to the left. Suddenly, out of the air, which seemed to condense like a mirage on the horizon, a woman appeared. She was incredibly beautiful, calm and majestic. She was at arm's length from my left. I calmly looked at her and knew that I was seeing death itself. I wasn't afraid. Serenity. Then it melted. A few years later, I became fascinated with Carlos Castateda's books and read in one of them that death is always next to us, on the left, at arm's length. All my visions and fears ended one day. I was around 15 years old. I was tormented by the feeling of the duality of the world, that I was standing at a crossroads of which way to live - spiritual or to be an ordinary human being. And I wanted to live an ordinary simple life, I remember that moment of choice very clearly. After that, everything went away, I stopped seeing, feeling the inexplicable, and spoons no longer stuck, as if enchanted, to my palms. But I continue to believe that there is magic in this world, but we are not connected anymore.

With best wishes your listener,
Olesya

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40. Bright light

Four years ago, I was living in a house in the countryside.
A bit isolated if you want to know the truth. Every day I would walk about 800 meters to reach the "civilization".
One particular day, my husband and I were walking and talking along that 800 m road as we did a lot of times. But that day the air felt different. It was dusk and a light wind blew and we could see the top trees moving like dancing and whispering. We were talking about my grandfather who passed away long time ago. I was remembering some of the beautiful moments we had experienced together and I was telling my husband how important he was in my life. Like a father I never had. All of a sudden, my husband and I, at the same time without saying nothing to each other moved aside because we saw a bright white light in the distance. We did the kind of reflex movement you do when you see or hear a car coming towards you. An instinctive reaction. We were expecting a car and we kept on talking and walking slower. No car appeared. Just the reminder of the white light at the very moment we were talking about my dear grandpa.

PS: No AI has been used

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41. Tennis ball

It happened in 1995. We lived in Ukraine in a nine-story building on level 8. Our son was born couple months ago. The family was happy but busy with brand new member. Luke, you have two children and you know how much parents tired with babies.

It was a usual night as many before. I slept with our cute baby boy in separate room. For sure the sleeping was not deep as I wanted. I woke up around 1 a.m. and heard the sound of bouncing ball from above

(level 9). The single adult lady lived in a condo just above ours. For some reason I was sure that it was exactly a tennis ball. The sounds were not aggressive or scared but very steady, pointed (boom, boom, boom) and sticky to listening. It wasn't noisy or offensive but caused internal worry and disturbed the peace of the sweet night sleeping. The baby was very quiet this night, any botheration from his side. He slept as a baby!

I was getting more tired and wanted to have a good rest while our child give me this permission. I decided to ask my husband to take the shift with son. Men usually better carry any paranormal experience or even don't notice them at all. My husband kindly agreed to be a night nanny.

The rest of my night in different bedroom was quiet, calm ant well-rested. Finally, I got a good sleeping hours.

The next morning was usual busy morning with little baby and I didn't have chance to speak with my second half, husband, who had to go to work.

Later, in the evening when I met my spouse after work, he told me a story that happened with him last night. He started to complain that he was very tired because had a bad sleep last night.

Now the big moment of the story! He explained that the unusual, extraordinary, never-heard before sound disturbed him and didn't let him sleep. It was a sound of tennis ball (boom, boom, boom). Yes, you've heard right, exactly "tennis ball" how I described above. The sounds were steady, pointed and fading away and started again and many, many times. All the same that I had before with one difference: I got a sleep in a different bedroom but my husband got "unsleep" in "paranormal environment".

Can you imagine my surprising!!! We got the same stuff at the same night and the same fillings: we were not afraid but we stayed without sleep under that tail away boom, boom, boom. We had to listen to that different noise because it was a cause of our stay awake. Indeed, I spoke with our neighbor. She told "No, no, no." She didn't do any activities with the ball, even daytime. She even didn't have balls.

I remembered this experience but anyway I doubted about background of these strange sounds. I thought, maybe we were very tired. The Anna's storytelling took

my criticism away. Never say never! Who knows what is waiting for you on the next corner.
I have a question now: why did I get this Luke's video information? Why did it pull out my memories? You know, because I need to improve my English by writing this story. This gives me opportunity to communicate with you and say one more time directly to you through the generously providing your e-mail address.

Tetiana

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42. Seven hands

Yukiko

This happened about three decades ago, when I was in junior high, in Tokyo. Back then, there was no smartphone, no instagram, no digital camera, so we needed to bring analog cameras to take photos, and bring the film to the shop to get them printed.
One day, we went on a school trip and our teacher took photos of students. The teacher printed the photos and gave them to each student.
And then, I found one strange photo among them.
In that photo, there were three people, two friends and me. Three of us sat on the grass field in the park, smiling. I was sitting in the center and two friends sat on either side of me.
And oddly enough, in the photo, there were seven hands even though there were only three people.
And the most scary thing was that the seventh hand was placed on my shoulder, just like someone friendly pat on my shoulder.
The hand was very clear and seemed natural, so if we saw the photo at a glance, we might not notice the strangeness. But three of us had our two hands clearly, and other than that, there was another one.
I don't believe in ghosts or any spiritual things, but I felt soooo creepy and scared.
So I brought the photo to the nearby temple and got the monk to do the ritual and get rid of bad spirits, or something.
Until today, I've tried not to think about the meaning of the photo. It's just so creepy.
This is my experience.
I hope this description makes sense, not scientifically makes sense, but grammatically makes sense.
Thank you for reading!

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43. Mother in the mirror

It was spring 2001. Two sisters in a shop and a mirror. There in the mirror suddenly appeared my mother who died a few months before. She was so beautiful and dressed with a colorful shirt. She was smiling as if she wanted to see us - my sister and me- for the last time.
I remember that she was so angry the day before she passed away, because she would have liked to live longer!
At first I thought it was my imagination but then I realized that it was real because my sister told she saw our mum as well.
I think that emotional bondings go beyond life! I was so close to my mother maybe too much and it seemed as if SOMEONE let her see her beloved before passing on.
OK, that's it.
Many years have passed from that day and now I feel as if I'm quite detached from the words I'm writing and the feelings I had. But still she was my mother and I loved her so much! My first child was a girl, Chiara. I thought it was a gift: a woman passes away, a new born came! Another life!
Elisa

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44. A visit at night time

Olga

I'm absolutely terrified of ghosts, anything supernatural, and horror stories. At the cinema, I always close my eyes during the scary bits, and even while listening to your podcast, I found myself thinking, 'Maybe I should just skip to the next one?' But there was one supernatural story I couldn't avoid. My mum broke her hip and was bedridden. My brother was looking after her, and they lived 3,000 km away from me. She was gradually getting worse, and my brother and I realised that something was about to happen that you can never quite prepare for. We spoke on the phone every day, and I knew the end was near. And then one night I woke up feeling as though a concrete slab was lying on top of me – something incredibly heavy; I found it difficult to move, difficult to breathe, and my temperature felt as though it was approaching 40 degrees. I thought I'd fallen seriously ill. I was simply crushed on the bed by this state. I wasn't sleeping; I was just lying there, wondering what this was and when it would end. At that moment, the thought struck me that if

this is how people die, it must be very hard. Then I drifted off to sleep and was woken by a call from my brother; he told me that our mum was no longer with us. My feeling and Mum's passing coincided in time. I have an inner intuition that it was Mum who came to say goodbye to me (I remember it all as if it were yesterday, I hope I won't be afraid of the dark today.
Olga

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45. Watched

About 15 years ago, when I was at university, I was going through a stressful time. In my final year, my friend and I rented a house, but we only stayed there for about 3–4 months.

One day, I came home from school and just wanted to sleep. In my dream, - I still doubt whether it was a dream or real- I was in the exact same room. It was very dark. When I opened my eyes, I saw strange creatures in the room. They told me I couldn't turn on the light. They were laughing and trying to touch me. I was frozen with fear.

Then my mum appeared. She looked young and very beautiful, with long black hair and pale skin. She sat next to me, hugged me, and told me she had had an accident and was dying. She said she wanted to see me one last time and say goodbye. We hugged, and then she tried to kiss me on the lips.

At that moment, I realised she wasn't really my mum. I tried to push her away and woke up screaming—in the same dark room, completely alone at home.

Even now, I still wonder what that was. While I was living in that house, I often felt like I was being watched. The strange thing is, my flatmate felt exactly the same. We never saw anything, but we both had that feeling. We even had similar dreams on the same nights.

We also used to hear strange noises coming from the next room. We were always too scared to open the door and check.

After I moved out, one of my friends—who knew nothing about these experiences—called me and asked if I had been on the street in front of that house.

I said no. He told me not to go there, because he had seen strange creatures at the window of my old bedroom. He said it felt like something was waiting for me there.

That really left me with a big question mark.

Gamze

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46. Needle in a Haystack

Anna

It was back in the days when our children were young. At the end of every spring I used to be very busy looking for a dacha (summer cottage) to rent. As we did not have our own one we desperately needed somewhere to go to spend summer holidays in the countryside.

One summer after having fruitlessly searched high and low, we got a suggestion from relatives of my husband's to stay at their small cottage in the suburbs of Saint Petersburg. Without any hesitation we went there to have a look at the place and the house. It was not our dream holiday destination though, still we accepted the offer.
At the weekend my husband and I went there to tidy everything up. In fact nobody had lived there for ages. So as one can imagine it was a real mess full of shabby furniture and useless dusty stuff. It took us almost the whole day to clear up the mess, to throw away what we were allowed to. Only in the evening completely exhausted did we get back home and I discovered that my silver necklace with the cross, I used to wear those days, was missing. No wonder, I had lost it. During all that fuss of sweeping, cleaning and scrapping it could definitely have happened . It goes without saying that I was very much upset and disappointed. But I couldn't help it. Only to accept.
In a week we went there again. This time to put some final touches, bring our own belongings, arrange the space for us and the kids, make it livable, possibly cosy and comfortable. On our way from the railway station we bumped into my husband's relatives. They told us that as they were mowing the lawn something had popped out from under the trimmer. Lo and Behold! It was a cross, my cross, my lost cross!!! I was overwhelmed with joy and surprise!!! Is it possible to find a tiny cross in the huge garden just mowing the lawn?! Yes!!!!

Sometimes wonders happen. The needle (well, the cross) was found in the hay. Hurray!

A Prophecy /A Prophetic Night Dream.

One night back in the days when we were still living in Russia, were young and our both kids were small I had a very realistic dream.

I was dreaming that I was in the middle of a huge crowd crammed from all sides by people. For whatever reason my children were not nearby, they were elsewhere in the crowd. Being very much worried and upset I was trying to find them among the people surrounding me, trying to reach out for them. But in vain. They were nowhere to be seen. I kept my fruitless attempts to make out where they might be for some time literally incapable of moving. The place was jam packed! People were squashed like sardines!

Then, suddenly I woke up, my heart was beating strongly. To my great relief I realized that it had been only a dream, a nightmare to be exact. I rose up, watched my both peacefully sleeping in their beds and headed to the kitchen to make some tea.
I turned the radio on and the first thing I heard in the news was about an incident in one of the restaurants in a provincial Russian town. In the evening a fire had suddenly started, caused allegedly by a fireworks organized inside! Insane!
All the people rushed towards the doors. But as the story goes only one was not locked. To make things worse, there was no firebrigade/firefighters in sight or even nearby! It arrived later, when a lot of people trying escape the building by pushing each other were literally pressed down, squeezed or crushed. (can't find the right word) Quite a few died for that reason, many more because of suffocation.
My first reaction was astonishment and horror. Then, came strong compassion towards those who were injured or died. All of them were young, because it was a night club in fact! Later, I got a creepy feeling: maybe I felt something that night, being fast asleep and open to some signals , the Universe sends us every now and then. Who knows?!

Mama, Papa, - Snow!!!

It happened when our daughter was only 1 and a half. She was our pride and joy as all babies are. She was very curious (no wonder at all), was a very good and thankful listener. She would listen with great interest and attention to the stories my husband and I, her Grandma and Grandpa used to read her. There were all sorts of children books in our house, which had played a huge part in our own lives and we, as parents, would turn to them when our both children were growing.
Probably that was the main reason our first child, our beloved daughter had started talking very early and by the time she turned two possessed quite a large vocabulary and was very imaginative at inventing her own funny words and language.
It was late autumn in St-Petersburg. It was freezing cold outside but still no signs of snow. One crispy morning while we were still staying/lying in bed we heard our daughter say: "Mama, Papa - snow!". We jumped out off our bed ran to the window and... She was right! It was snowy!!! How did she know? Her bed was far from the window. Moreover, she had just woken up! Besides, she had never seen the snow in her life in real. It was her first winter! Only in books could she see it. And how come she new that it had been snowing?!
So many questions and no answers! We both were bewildered, puzzled and at a loss for words to describe our feelings and emotions.
Our daughter is no longer a small child, nor is she even a young girl, she is 31 and lives her own life, just on her own, away from us, but the memories of that extraordinary day and the feelings we experienced back than remain with us and will stay forever.

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47. A creaking noise!

Serena, from Côte d'Ivoire (a western African country 🇨🇮).

At my grandparents house, where I grew up, there were always people around (Nannies, housemaids, uncles, you name it), which made it nearly impossible to sleep alone in a bedroom. Till one day, when I was around 12-ish years old, the staff took a week off. That day, I had to sleep alone, in my room. At night, I had to hit the hay early because I had done the chores, so was worn out. I brushed my teeth, said good night to my grandparents, got into the bedroom, closed the door behind me, stretched out on the bed, and instantly zoned out, you know, usual thing.

But at around 1 a.m., a creaking noise suddenly woke me up; it was the door. Since it was my first time sleeping all alone, I was a bit afraid of turning off the lights. So when the noise woke me up, I could naturally see it was the door. I thought it was

my grandmother who was sleeping in the next room, coming to check up on me. But at my astonishing surprise, it was the door, opening ITSELF. Once saw it wide opened, and that I couldn't see anyone, my first reaction was to freaking scream energetically. But when I started screaming, it was like I were put on mute option; there was no sound coming out of my mouth.
I could only hear it in my head.
Suddenly, the door slammed,and the lights when off. And I would see myself falling down on the floor, just petrified, and would feel something coming on me, sit on my chest, and could feel it starting to choke me. When I felt its hands on my neck, I would try to flail at it but couldn't, since it totally froze me. I couldn't move my body. I was just conscious that I was being choked by something, but was just weak, powerless to stop it.
Since I was a church girl at that time, my very last hope went on God. Therefore, I happened to start screaming repeatedly in my head JESUS SAVE ME! A few seconds later, I don't know if it truly was Jesus coming to my rescue, but I started feeling my body back, finding myself energized, yet out of breath. And then suddenly, as hard as possible I abruptly started wrestling with the thing. Little by little, it felt going away.
After that, I didn't sleep a wink, I spent the rest of sleep time only praying, and being grateful to God.
I never told anyone about it, not even my grandmother.
It didn't even happen again.
That's the very first time I ever told it.

Serena.

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48. A UFO?

When I was a child, I'd spend hours playing with my brother in our garden.

One day, when we were running around the house as we often did, my brother shouted, 'Look, there's a UFO in the sky!' And indeed, there was a strange, shining object flying high above the trees. "We've got to take a photo of it," I said, "but who will go for the camera?" "You go," my brother answered. I'd normally argue with him but I knew there was no time to lose so I rushed into the house to get it. But when I went back to the garden the UFO was already gone…

I have no idea what it really was. Maybe a dream or my imagination, or maybe it really was a UFO…

I don't even know if that counts as a paranormal experience but that's what really happened to me (or so I think).

Justyna

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49. Drums in the night

When I lived in Dakar a long time ago, my husband and I decided to visit the Niokolo-Koba, a wildlife reserve, with a couple of friends, their daughter, and my mother.
We filled two cars with everything we needed for our trip because there is no hotel or B&B in this area, only crocodiles, lions, monkeys, warthogs, buffaloes...
Our tour was marvellous until one tyre of our car blew out. We were in the tall grass of the savannah, so it was a delicate operation to change the tyre. Congratulations to our husbands! They took risks, they could have been prey to a lion… We were so afraid.

We went on with our journey and another incident happened: a second tyre exploded. What a panic!

Fortunately, we were near the exit of the park, and the road was a bit better, but there was no traffic. We were alone in the depths of Africa.
We needed a mechanic to repair our two tyres.
Only one problem remained: the two men took the working car and left us on the side of the road in the African countryside. The nearest town was 70 km away. We, the women, stayed behind, waiting for them…
We, the women, stayed behind, waiting for them, not knowing whether they would find a mechanic. Hours passed slowly, and sunset fell, bringing fear and stress.
A local man appeared, riding a bicycle. We tried to talk to him, but he was afraid of us…
What a pity to be alone, without the help of another human being.
Our worry was growing. At the same time, the sky was getting darker. Then we heard a drum… and another one… and still more…
Our imagination took over and reminded us of the times of man-eating cannibals.
Brrr… poor us. What were we going to become?
Fear gave us a stomach ache.
Later that night, we saw lights, then heard the roar of an engine. We were saved!

Corrected version with humour and fearfulness by chatgpt :

When I lived in Dakar a long time ago, my husband and I decided—very innocently—to visit the Niokolo-Koba wildlife reserve with a couple of friends, their daughter, and my mother. What could possibly go wrong?
We packed two cars with everything we needed, because there are no hotels, no B&Bs—just crocodiles, lions, monkeys, warthogs, buffaloes… you know, the usual welcoming committee.
At first, the trip was marvellous. Until, of course, one tyre blew out. We were stranded in tall savannah grass—the perfect hiding place for anything with teeth. Changing the tyre became a heroic act. Congratulations to our husbands! Truly brave… or completely reckless. After all, they could have been lunch. We, meanwhile, perfected the art of silent panic.
We carried on. Because clearly, we hadn't learned our lesson. And then—bang! A second tyre exploded. This time, no poetry, just pure panic.
Luckily, we were near the park's exit. The road was slightly better… but deserted. No cars, no people—nothing. Just us, alone in the vastness of Africa.
We needed a mechanic. Simple problem… impossible situation.
So the men made a decision: they took the one working car and left us behind. Yes—left us. On the side of the road. In the middle of nowhere. With a cheerful "We'll be back!" The nearest town was 70 km away. Comforting, isn't it?
So there we were: the women, abandoned but trying to stay dignified. We waited. And waited. And waited some more…
As the sun went down, so did our courage. Shadows stretched, sounds sharpened, and every rustle in the grass became a potential predator with excellent hearing and a growing appetite.
Then, like a scene from a strange dream, a man appeared on a bicycle. Salvation! We tried to talk to him… but he looked at us as if we were the dangerous ones—and quickly disappeared. Reassuring. Very reassuring.
Darkness settled in. Our worry grew into full-blown dread. And then we heard it: a drum. Then another. And another…
That was enough. Our imagination, clearly not our friend, took control. In our minds, we were no longer tourists—we were characters in a very bad story involving cannibals.
Brrr… poor us. What were we going to become?
Fear twisted our stomachs into knots. Every minute felt like an hour. Every sound felt like a warning.
And then—finally—lights in the distance.

An engine.
Real, beautiful, life-saving noise.
We had never been so happy to hear a car.

Hélène from a small village at the bottom of mount Ventoux, not far from Avignon and Orange !

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50. The Last Farewell

When your parents are middle-aged, you don't think about it very often. Perhaps a fleeting thought comes to your mind occasionally, often vague and quickly fading away. However, as time goes by, and your parents grow older and older and are ofttimes plagued by illnesses and diseases, these thoughts of yours begin to come to you more frequently and become increasingly clearer. Of course, you constantly try to push them away, unwilling to believe it, thinking them to be just a mirage, but they are inexorably creeping to you closer and closer. And eventually, you clearly understand that sooner or later this will inevitably happen to you as well. Just as it happened to others in all times before, of course, unless fate decides that you should pass away before them. Yes, I am writing about the death of the people most dear to any person, his parents.

It happened fifteen years ago, on March 8th, the International Women's Day. This holiday is traditionally celebrated in our country. The weather was fine, the sun was shining and birds were singing. Spring struggled to come into its own, but winter refused to retreat. That morning, I called my mother and my brother's wife to congratulate them on that occasion. And during my phone conversation, nothing foreshadowed a terrible disaster. Nothing of the kind. Before that day I often heard of many people having the ability to anticipate something terrible or tragic. But such forebode had nothing to do with me. No premonition of mine that something terrible was about to happen that very day. Just a few days before my dad was eventually discharged from the hospital because, according to the doctors, he was feeling much better.

But then, a few hours later, there was another call. It was my brother's wife. And she said those words that rolled through my soul like an ominous echo. "Oh, Misha, our father has just died..." It was like lightning out of the blue. I got hysterical and sobbed for hours. Men also cry.

Then I drove with my family to a small town where my parents lived. I don't know how I managed to get my parents' house, but that journey was like a bad dream for me indeed. When I saw my dead father, his face expressed an inexplicable tranquility, and it seemed as if his mouth was just frozen in a slight and peaceful smile.

And then it all happened that many people had experienced many times before: sudden rustling sounds in my father's empty bedroom, an occasional slight movement of the window curtains, and a faint, barely perceptible movement of air in completely closed rooms of the house. But none of these was perceived as something terrifying, frightening, or blood-curdling to me. Instead, these were subtle, soft and sometimes barely noticeable signs of … something. Something unusual, something that we are not yet used to. For me personally it seemed quite tangible and real.

But what happened just after the burial was extraordinary and very odd... At that moment, there was still snow on the trees, roofs of houses, and the ground. Almost all of our friends and relatives had already left the cemetery, but my mother, my wife, and my brother stayed for a while near my father's grave. Finally, it was time for us to leave, and we got into our car. I got behind the wheel. We started moving and the car began to accelerate: second gear, third gear, fourth gear. When the car reached a speed of about 60 km/h, it suddenly began to slow down on its own, as if something or someone was pulling it back and preventing it from moving forwards. 50 km/h, 40 km/h, 30 km/h... I was forced to shift gears: third gear, second gear, first gear. Finally, the car stopped. I started it again and put it in first gear, but it stood like rooted in the ground. Again and again, I made more attempts to get the car moving: the engine continued to run, but the car remained motionless. Finally, I turned off the engine and got out to inspect the car. I found no obvious or visible signs of damage or breakdown. Finally, I decided the car had broken down in some way or other, so I called a towing service. Luckily, they confirmed that a tow truck was on the way towards us. After that, I made some more attempts to start moving, but to no avail.

Then, my mother, who was sitting next to me, suddenly said, "Alexey, please let us go!" Alexey was my father's first name. And after these words, I tried again, turned the starter on, put the car into first gear, and... the car began to move. I called the car towing service again and cancelled my request.

The next day, I had my car completely diagnosed and checked at a car service center, but no signs of damage or malfunction were found. My car was perfectly all right.

“What was wrong with the car?”, my mother asked me when I returned from the car service center. “They said it’s perfectly all right”, I replied.

“So, I believe this incident was your father’s last farewell”, were my mother’s words…

The End.

Written by Michael Solovyov
Ukraine

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51. While cutting a pig’s leg…

Ivan

I used to live in an apartment in my hometown with my family. I think we moved there in 2003 or something like that. It was bigger than our previous place and we started our new life there. One day my family bought a huge pig’s leg and I was given the task of cutting it into pieces and making some minced meat. The leg was so huge that it couldn’t fit on the kitchen table, so I decided to bring it to the bathroom and cut it there. I took a long sharp knife and the leg to the bathroom. I was home alone at that time. I left the door to the bathroom open because the bathroom wasn’t very wide and I thought it might become hot there.

While cutting the leg, I had a very strange feeling, like someone was passing behind me. My heartbeat increased, I started sweating and felt scared. When I turned around, of course no one was there. I even checked the other rooms, but the apartment was empty. I was the only person there.

A few years later, I had another strange experience there. All my family was sitting in the living room and watching TV. The TV was on one side of the room and we were sitting on chairs and a sofa in front of it. Our cat entered the room a bit later. There was a chair next to the closet. When the cat was passing in front of that empty

chair, she suddenly started hissing, as if someone was sitting there. But the chair was empty. We all had the same thought at that moment.

I don't remember how or when we learned that the family who had lived in that apartment before us had a daughter. Their daughter left the house one day and never returned. Maybe it was her ghost trying to come back home, I don't know.

Back then, when I was cutting the pig's leg, I think we already had the cat, and she was sleeping somewhere on the bed or on the sofa when I was trying to find "someone" in the apartment.

After a few years of living there, we moved to another place. The building was new and before that there had been a potato field. The atmosphere of the place felt completely different. Our cat could go freely into the hallway outside the apartment and even walk to other floors. In the previous place, she was always so scared to go into the hallway, like something bad was waiting for her.

This is the end of my story. I can share more interesting things, but I wasn't directly involved in them, so maybe that's not what this competition is about. Thank you for reading.

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52. The cat that meowed

I could not remember when it was, probably 4 or 5 years ago. My friend, Nhan, and I drove to a Buddhist temple in Nong Khai, a city in Northeast Thailand, from Lop Buri, a city in the central region, with my cat, a Golden Tabby Scottish-Straight. We took about 9 hours to get there and stayed for 2 nights. Nhan is very religious so he invited me there to do things that Buddhist realises good ones such as cleaning a temple, fixing roof, and meditation. Things went normal till the second day. That day in the morning, Nhan told me that tonight he would take me to go to a ordination hall in the temple where there is the black Buddha statue for meditation. However, we had chilling out in the city and got back quite late. We thus went to sleep, but I did ask him that if it is really okay that we do not go to meditate tonight. He was too tired to answer me and dropped off in no time.

From that time, my cat started to act strangely. He cried very intensely with no reason, and I thought that it was so strange because he had never been like this when I took him for a trip. I was trying to sleep while Nhan was sleeping like a log

with loud snoring. I think I was tossing and turning all night until Nhan suddenly sat bolt upright at around 3 or 4 am. He said that he felt a sharp warm on his back. It was my cat. He peed on him, at the center of Nhan's back despite the fact that I brought his litter tray here as well. When Nhan realised that it was the pee, he seriously told me that we need to go now to the Statue.

We then walked there, about 300 metres from our room, but of course Nhan did have a brief shower 😆, poor him. When we got there, we started chanting the Buddhist chants and then meditating. (I forgot to tell you that before that time I had been doing meditation quite seriously for a longtime.) During the meditation, I am not sure whether I was asleep or in the Zen state. I met a man in there and had a talk with him by not speaking. He told me he was Indian and came here with the Statue long time ago. He expressed his gratitude to me for chanting and meditating here. I could not remember what we had talked after that right now, while I'm writing this, but at the time I remembered every thing. When we finished the meditation, could be about 2 hours, I told Nhan about the Man. Nhan made a quite surprising face and said that this Statue is literally from India, which I did not know that before.

Then, we went back to our room, and found that my cat was hiding in a gap of a stack of folded mats, like he was scared of something. That morning we drove back to Lop Buri, and my cat stopped meowing for 3 or days.

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53. The medium with a message

My story I´d like to tell you about today is a true experience I´ve had about three years ago after the passing of my beloved dad in March 2023. He´d had a heart attack in November 2022 leading to three months of coma after a long resuscitation. So he didn´t witness the birth of his first grandchild, my son, because of his comatose state.
My story is the reason why I´m quite able to relate to Anna Brooke´s story from the episode 984 about paranormal experiences, which I honestly enjoyed listening to very much.

On a summer´s day in 2023 I accompanied my mum to a medium just like the one Anna Brook consulted. The lady was an experienced, trained medium with an official degree. She´d chosen this professional path in her life after the tragic loss of her own child earlier in life. She hadn't received any information about us or even

the person whose loss we were mourning. My personal expectations had been rather low before the meeting, because I didn´t believe in paranormal stuff and I couldn´t really imagine any afterlife.
When we sat down in the office of the medium she didn´t ask any questions in our direction, but immediately started reaching out to any spirits in our presence.
After less than one minute she gave us the information that there was someone indeed, who was very eager to communicate with my mum and me. She was talking about a quite nervous seeming man, who had never believed in an afterlife and something paranormal like that during his lifetime. Just like my father, I thought in my mind. The medium then seemed confused because the spirit wanted to tell her his name which appeared to her in in written letters. She explained that the deceased get their message across for example through written words that are visualized in her head, through pictures that come up, feelings and sometimes actual voice. She didn´t get the name because it was quite an unusual name in Germany, more commonly used in England, actually and he gave her his nickname/ short version, she had never heard of before. When she gave us the nickname, which we, in our family, had only used in terms of him becoming a proud grandpa, our feelings were all over the place and we were flooded in tears.

In the following hour the medium basically narrated our life. She received information from the spirit of my dad and passed it on to us. The medium actually recorded the meeting and gave us the audio data afterwards, which proves no cold reading took place and there scarcely was any talking of my mum and me at all. She gave such accurate information about our family life, our home, my dad´s favourite food, his habits, the characteristics of our family members, the circumstances of my father´s death and much more. Often seen out-of-context giggles of my son lying in his cot, she declared as the result of my dad communicating with my little one. Also remarkable was that my dad wanted to make sure that we know, that the reticence and reclusiveness of my brother, which was absolutely spot on, was a mask he put on to deal with the loss. He emphasized that he does need an extra attention from the family because he can´t come forward with his feelings on his own.

For my mum the most mind-boggling aspect of the meeting was the following: Before the appointment my mum had told me about the fact that she often talked to my dad in her mind and she did have the feeling of him being present in some sort, which she couldn't explain herself. In the evenings when she lay alone in bed, she often felt him so much and so close that she weirdly seemed to feel his touch on her shoulder or actually she got a feeling as if he sometimes lay on her hair and jokingly

spoke out something like "Schatz, Du liegst auf meinen Haaren (Darling, you´re lying on my hair)". The medium brought exactly this very private situation forward, that my mum had told no one about, except me just before the appointment. She gave us the information from my dad that he often approaches her in the evenings at bedtime and asked specifically if my mum would actually feel his presence there physically.
My mum and I couldn´ t believe what we heard, because everything the lady told us was so spot on true. There was no guessing, no flaws of the medium, just a good hour full of precise details of our most private family life and exactly the kinds of things my father would have said and done.

Another thing that had struck my attention before the meeting was that I´d recognized heart shapes disproportionally often in my daily life. After the passing of my dad there for example were heart-shaped parsley leaves in my meal and a heart-shaped ball of threads lying on the floor. When my son dropped a spoonful of porridge, the chunk came down on the floor as a clear heart shape and our trees in the garden formed a heart with their leaves. Even though I didn´t believe in paranormal things or extrasensory powers, it did definitely catch my attention for it was impossible to miss. What was quite remarkable was that the medium finally gave me the following message of my dad at the end of the meeting: "Your dad is incredibly proud, happy and relieved that you get all of his hearts he keeps sending to you."

We did experience other situations that gave hints on the presence of my late dad in our earthly life that had to do with our dog seeming to feel his presence and acting accordingly and my little son saying every now and then that he notices his grandpa either somewhere in the house, in the car or in some other place. Sometimes he even tells us about things his grandpa has said to him. Another point I have in common with Anna Brooke is that one night I awoke from sleep and for a couple of seconds was convinced, I´d seen the silhouette of my dad sitting at the far left end of my bed. When I, in a positively agitated state, turned on the light, the shape was gone and I was left with a deep feeling that my father had been very close to me.

Mentioning all of our paranormal experiences would take up too much time though and would make this story far too long. So I´ll leave it at that now.

All of this sounds absolutely weird, supernatural, unbelievable and crazy. Many people would never believe a single word of this, even though there´s proof on the audio data, because it´s just unimaginable. That´s why we´ve told only our closest

friends and family about our experience so far. After listening to the amazing podcast episode with Anna Brooke though, I thought this information about the medium sounds familiar and I felt quite understood. By sending you our experience with a very reputable medium, I´d like to give back the message that it seems to be true: There seems to be something beyond death, that our human mind can´t grasp. For the people who just don´t believe in it, which is perfectly okay and understandable, this might just be another paranormal story, but for the people who are open-minded for something like this, it might be valuable information, give hope, console grief or just heal a bit.

Sarah

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54. Somebody lying beside me, at night

After I listened to Anna's story, I felt I had a very similar experience and I must speak it out. When I told my friends about this experience, I felt they didn't believe me and they thought I was somehow mad. And I stopped talking about that for about 30 years. Now I can speak out loud about it. I live in Sweden, and I live alone. This happened to me about 30 years ago. One particular night I woke up and felt like somebody was laying beside me. I tried to turn around and see ,but I couldn't move. I didn't know how long or how many times I 've tried. And at least I could turn around and I saw nothing, I realised that was just a nightmare. but when it happened three nights in a row. I began to think there was something weird happening here. I told a friend of mine about it. and she told me when I go to bed just remember to put my indoor slippers upside down.(I always wear sleepers at home and I never walk barefoot at home) and I did as she told me. but it didn't work. I still felt somebody lying beside me at night. 'It' did nothing, 'It' just laid quite beside me. and sometimes when I turned and moved on bed I felt I nodded 'It' somehow. And I thought that must be a woman. because if 'It' was a man, maybe It would behave in another way? And after the fifth night, I began to think I must do something with it. maybe ask some people for advice on what to do to get rid of 'It'. At the six night. At midnight, I got up and went to the toilet. On my way back to my bedroom, when I was just passing my bedroom door, I bumped into 'a woman' (She was not a physical body, The body was blurring. Even her white dress and her face were blurring. she looked like a woman in my age, 35 years old. . It was like I bumped into a balloon body.) and we both were chocked at that moment. I could see her face even though it was not so clear, her face color was as white as a moon. but by the reaction and body language I could see and felt she was as much chocked as I. But just in a moment she just disappeared and I saw there she

disappeared there was “my” bedside table. and at the same time I just said ‘oh there you are’. I now understand why she was here. (for about a week ago, I picked that bedside table from a container where I live , the landlord puts out a big container once a month for the tenants who want to get rid of their furniture. And everyone else can take what they want from the container to reuse them.) so I felt released after I realised what was going on here. then I went to bed and sleep and that night I felt that she wasn’t laying beside me. When the morning came. I stood in front of my bedside table and said , “today I have to move you out because you are not belonging here. and I’m sorry that I picked you and bring you to my home. I’ll move you to my basement and hope you stay there. Don’t ever try to come back again and make me have to destroy you. if you do, I will throw you to the rubbish container and they will burn your place, and I will also ask some medium people to drive you out. It won’t be good for you.” and then I put the table among my things in the basement. And after that no more disturbing things happen. I go to my basement maybe 3 or 4 times a year and when I was there I usually say to the table, “if you are still here I hope you are fine”. and after maybe 5 years I moved to another apartment and I gave all my furniture and all stuff in my basement storage to a charity second hand organisation. I don’t think she still used the table as her place. she maybe had found her way to get back to where she belongs, who knows? Best wishes to you and Anna.

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55. The last flight

In the 1980s I had a younger friend Jarek. He has the inborn talent to play trombone. Just after finishing The Katowice University of Music he was offered to join the best Polish jazz orchestra – The Alex Band. They accompanied famous singers at festivals and gave concerts all over the word.

At that time a group of friends and I were building terraced houses for all of us including Jarek. To thank us for supervising the construction of his house Jarek (had?) always brought us newly released albums mainly on cassette tapes.

Once we were waiting for him to come from Switzerland. The Alex Band had one-year contract with the biggest European circus.

The flight from Zurich was delayed, and Jarek arrived late in the evening. He missed his girlfriend very much. Unfortunately at that time , there was no train to Wrocław where his girlfriend Joanna lived. So he asked me to lend him a car.

We suggested he stay overnight and leave at dawn. But Jarek missed her so much that he decided to go immediately. So he left for Wrocław (160km) around 11 p.m.

You must know that mobile phones appeared in Poland in the 1990s. So we couldn't call him on his way. (we couldn't get in touch with him on his way).

At 2:00 a.m. the telephone rang. Jarek's girl friend Joanna told us he hadn't arrived. The same call repeated several more times. Both she and we were getting more and more scared.

The car couldn't possibly have broken down. It was three years old Dimler.

At 8:00 our local police officer came to tell us (they found me because DB was mine and they had known a plate number) that Jarek had an fatal accident. He had a head-on collision with a truck driven by drunk bloke.

The police and the prosecutor let me take the wrecked car after a few months. They had to check if the car was in working order – that's normal procedure.

Actually it was half of the car. It had been cut lengthwise. I got the passenger half.

We only took the cassettes from the car that Jarek had forgotten to give us. And an undemaged radio. One of the cassettes got stuck in the radio.

After arriving home we started listening the cassette that was stuck in the radio.

There were new ABBA's hits on one side.

On the other side of the tape there was a beautiful musical. I do not remember the exact title. It was something like „The flight to heaven" or „The flight to paradise", or perhaps „The last flight".

The reporter is covering the flight. And you can hear a wonderful gospel.

„We are at Paradise Airport. People gather at the gate of fate. No one knows when they will be allowed to pass through the gate. Some of them are walking near the gate, some people are sitting in the wheelchairs, some of them are lying in bed (s?).

There are also families who are seeing off those who are leaving. Laughter and crying are heard.

The gate opens and Christ invites some people on board. I'm one of them. When the plane is full it starts taxing to the runway. All passengers seem to be excited. After taking off the plane circles around the city and we are able to see our hospital, funeral and the cemetery.

Excellent food and variety of drinks are served throughout the flight. After some time we are starting to approach for landing. Shortly thereafter God welcomes us to heaven.

An angelic choir sings, accompanied by an orchestra of the best musicians in the world who have long since passed away and left the earth".

Well. We were shocked to hear all this. We listened to it many times with eyes full of tears.

As far as I remember my wife didn't agree to me carrying this cassette in the car. In the end we gave it to Joanna, Jarek's girlfriend. She was anxious to get this tape.

Wojtek

Luke: Sorry for your loss Wojtek

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56. The Noise

1/ The first night I heard it

It happened one night while I was sleeping in my tent during a solo hike in the Pyrenees last year. I had found the perfect bivouac spot to get a good night's sleep. In the middle of the night, I was woken up by the wind that had picked up… I could hear the howling gusts of wind and could see the fabric of my tent fluttering, that really wasn't reassuring at all; I was afraid that my small tent would blow away! I was unable to fall asleep again…
Suddenly the wind stopped and there was a deep silence in this cold night, it was at that moment that I heard the Noise, like a grinding or a creaking, around my tent.
I said to myself "no worry, I recognise that sound – it's the crack of a branch".

But after a short time of thinking, I sat up with a start, frightened, and becoming aware : actually that's impossible, there aren't any trees around me….

It was like the screech of old, rusty wheels; this unidentified sound made a "Crrrriiinnnkkkkkkkk", stopping and then starting again five or ten minutes later… It was like something approaching to my tent, step by step!

'My silly imagination', I supposed. But honestly, I was paralysed in my sleeping bag in the darkness of my tent, not daring to make a single sound or a movement, keeping an ear out for that sound.

I dozed off and on for the rest of the night and I woke up groggy but safe and sound. Then, I started my morning hiking routine: Packing my damp tent, arrrfff the morning dew is not the best thing during a trek, putting all my gears into my backpack, and making sure that I left no trace in the place where I slept. Ready for a new walking day !

I was in Ariège – A French department - not far from the Spanish border, and my aim was to reach the Mediterranean by following hiking trails through the mountains, mainly a trail called GR10.

The weather was dreadful for the past two days with drizzle and fog, and as a consequence I had the impression I was the only human walking in that area.

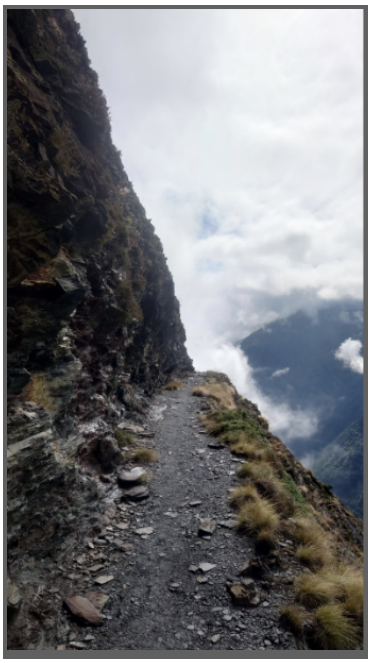
2/ The second night

The next night under my tent, when I was falling asleep, I heard again this noise "Crrrriiinnnkkkkkkkk".

Oh noooo, not again! This sounds turned my blood to ice.

The sound was clear, I distinctly heard this sound, it was outside of my tent. "Crrrriiinnnkkkkkkkk". A trembling ran down my back and legs. I didn't dare move. I thought to myself that it would be better to stay sheltered in my tent, even though it offers only fragile protection! Also, I didn't dare to switch on my torch, but I had my eyes wide open to spot a possible shadow or movement.

I just dared to scream aloud "Ooohhhh F#!K, is someone there 💀🤬[1]?", but the sound of my voice was faint ….
Anyway, "In Ariège, no one can hear you scream" I thought to myself !
Was it in my imagination? Or was it a real sound? I had the impression of hearing the White Lady in a rusty wheelchair.
I checked my smartphone, no signal! I tried to think about other things, why not listen to some music or better still an episode of "Luke's English podcast". I had downloaded on my smartphone some episodes where Luke reads extracts from *The War of the World*. I was not sure if this was the right place or the right time to listen to that? Anyway, I needed to save my phone's battery!



It was again an uncomfortable night and the next day the weather was always overcast. I continued to delve deeper into the mountains, I felt as if I were all alone in those mountains, I walked along the path, thinking back on the events of the last night. I'm used to sleeping outdoors and I have never had any problems, I racked my brain to find an explanation:

- Is it the white lady in a rusty wheelchair prowling around my tent ?
- Is it a weird animal, a new hybrid animal with a new cry, searching for food?
- Is it an alien from another planet searching an human to kidnap ?
- Or maybe a joke to scare the hikers?
- Or, as this noise sounds like branches, is it an Ent from the Middle Earth walking and checking his forest?

3/ The third night

I was woken up in the middle of the night and the noise was here, clearly audible. “Crrrriiinnnkkkkkkkk”. Why this sound follow me ?
This time, I had a new problem: I needed to go to the toilets. ARRRGGGGG, I didn’t want to leave the comfort and warmth of my sleeping bag and go out of my tent in that dark night!
I tried to find a solution… I could use the mountaineering technic: the climbers often use a dedicated "pee bottle", this is usually a wide-mouthed plastic bottle that they can urinate into without leaving their sleeping bag. As you can imagine, this process requires accurate and careful movements to avoid any unfortunate incidents! And what’s more, when this process is completed it gives you a hot water bottle to keep you warm (Just make sure the bottle is tightly closed!).
I had a plastic bottle of water, but it was half full, and I’ll need that water for tomorrow morning!
So I made the decision to get out of my tent 😰😰😰…. I opened carefully my inner tent, ZZZIIIIIIIPPPPPP, put on my shoes, then opened the outer tent, stepped outside of my tent and unfolded my whole numb body.
I walked quickly for a few metres and urinated.
And after, on my way back to my tent, I looked up and I saw……
I saw a night full of stars and the Milky Way was clearly visible, it was fabulous, I contemplated this sky that I had forgotten, because of the terrible weather I hadn’t had a chance to look at the stars in the sky night. I hadn’t seen a such beautiful starry night for a long time ago. I felt lucky to see this spectacle.
The atmosphere was quiet and even reassuring, there was no sign of that strange noise, it was as if it had vanished. I could have stayed for a long time gazing at the stars but it was a bit nippy and I went back to my tent. I slept like a log the rest of this night.

As I walked along the path the next day, I thought back about this noise and tried again to find an explanation. My preferred option to explain the noise is an Ent, from *The Lord of the Rings*, is it Treebeard or another Ent shepherds of the trees ? After all, the first time I heard this noise I thought that it was a creaking of a tree branch!
I’m a logical person who is sceptic about the paranormal events and I always think there is a scientific explanation, but sometimes it can be fun to think there is a bit fantasy in the world around us, it's as if I've travelled to another world, a magic world, the forest that I walked through I compare it now to the ancient Forest of Fangorn in the mystery mountains full of legends.

Epilogue

For the rest of my trek, I didn't hear again this noise or I didn't pay attention anymore, and there were a few more hikers on the path, I didn't definitely no longer alone!

Once I reached the end of my journey, in Banyuls-sur-Mer, I talked to another hiker who he made the entire GR10 trail, we shared our experiences that we had lived on the hiking trail, and he told me that during a night he had heard an unidentified and scary snuffling around his tent, like an animal grunt. I told him, in my case, I had heard also a strange noise like a creaking. Maybe we interpret the night sounds in our own way.

Anyway, this adventure won't stop me from going on solo hiking, and above all, it's made me want to re-read again *The Lord of the Rings*!

BH

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57. The hat

Last Year, my husband and I had to cut all our grass on a big area, and when its dry, we had to compile all the hey, and throw it on a small tractor. It was hot and sunny. That's why I decided to put a straw hat on my head, so that I don't burn my skin. I raked the dry grass, and suddenly I felt a draught around my head and at the same

time I couldn't' feel the brim anymore around my head. I was engrossed in my work, so I didn't pay any attention to this incident.
After some time has passed, I asked my husband, if he can find my hat. It had to be somewhere. But he hadn't noticed anything and couldn't find the hat either.

I looked everywhere for the hat, even in the haystack and the neighbouring fields, but I still haven't found it.

Sonja

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58. Unmistakable rustling of a newspaper

When my stepdad was younger, he was an incredibly hard worker. He chose to worked overnight shifts cuz that work paid well, and unlike most people his age, he was disciplined enough to save almost every dollar he earned. By the time he was still quite young, he had saved enough money to buy himself a big house.

He wants to be a free hold and landlord to pay off living expenses so he decided to rent the spare out. Some rooms went to his childhood friends, while others were rented to beautiful international female students. To be honest, he later admitted that part of his motivation was the hope that he might meet his future girlfriend among them.

One of his childhood friends had developed a serious drinking problem and had become an alcoholic. Then one tragic night, after drinking far too much, his friend suffered a terrible accident and bled to death.

My stepdad was so sad. They had grown up together, and losing him was heartbreaking. But life carried on, as it always does. After some time, he renovated the room where his friend had stayed and rented it out to a lovely British girl.

That was when strange things began to happen. It was a late summer night when the girl first experienced something unsettling. She woke suddenly to find her room unnaturally cold. Not just cool, but ice-cold. At first, she thought she might be getting sick, so she pulled an extra blanket over herself. Just as she was drifting back to sleep, she felt it. A sharp tug on her blanket. Then another. It felt unmistakably like someone was trying to pull it off her. She was so terrified, she

immediately called my stepdad at work, begging him to come home. He left work and rushed back to the house.

Deep down, he already suspected it might somehow be the spirit of his late friend, he decided to swap rooms with her. Oddly enough, after they changed rooms, nothing happened to the girl again. But that may have been because my stepdad only slept there during the daytime, since he continued working overnight shifts.

The every next day the girl called her family in the UK and received devastating news from home: her grandmother had recently passed away. Her family had been trying to hide it from her so she wouldn't worry while abroad. Naturally, she came to believe that the icy room and the shaking blanket had been her grandmother visiting to say goodbye.

But then came the night that changed my stepdad's mind. One evening, he had the night off and decided to sleep in that room. In the middle of the night, the same freezing cold filled the room. Then he heard the unmistakable rustling of his newspaper beside him. It was as if invisible fingers were turning the pages. Most people would have been terrified. On the contrary, my stepdad wasn't. If anything, he was fascinated. Instead of panicking, he calmly started talking into the darkness, convinced it was his old friend. He tried to start a conversation, asking questions and waiting for some kind of reply. There was no voice. No other messages. No clear answer. Only there or hear the soft sound of a single page turning. Then, half-jokingly, he flipped the newspaper to the lotto section and said, "Alright then, if it's really you, give me next week's lotto winning numbers."

He always swore that at that moment, he could feel his friend standing right beside him. Unfortunately, no winning numbers ever appeared.

Years passed. My stepdad never ended up marrying one of the international students. Instead, he eventually sold the house, traveled to China, met my mum there, and started a completely different chapter of his life.

Now our family lives happily in NewZealand, But perhaps that experience left its mark on him. Because to this day, every weekend, he insists that family movie night should always involve a horror film. And honestly? Maybe he knows something the rest of us don't. Hahahaha…

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59. The Skulls

I was near 18 when it happened. Surely, I had some experience with the strange, unbelievable things early on, as others did, but that adventure was really uncanny. It was the archeology expedition, just after my first course in the history department. We dig the Scythians' settlement. There were no tsar's graves full of gold and treasures and mystery, but only hard, hot soil at the top of the steppe hill. If you think that archeology is work with brushes and brooms, you are mistaken. When you are a first-year student, your best friends at practice are a shovel and a pickaxe, and your finds are only shards of pottery and livestock's bones. Nothing romantic at all.

So, we slept in tents in a sparse grove beneath the hill, awaking at 5 and working until noon like bulldozers. In the afternoon, it was impossible cuz the sun. The hill's plateau was divided into several square sets that had to be dug by 50 lucky boys and girls. Four bodies per set. I got the place near the ruins of the fortress wall. It made my destiny a bit easier cuz, according to the rules, the stones were left in place, so our digging efforts were reduced. Essentially, it was hot, hard - we all got a lot of calluses - and bored. After two weeks, we became tired and frustrated enough. No one found anything interesting. Except for a couple of simple Greek amphoras for storing oil and a few ugly silver beads.

-GOLD!

The cry from the other side of the plateau made me jump as if I had been bitten by a snake.

- SKULLS!

When the next yelp sounded, I was already running through the numerous square sets, balancing on the verges, trying to avoid falling down into it. They have already been dangerously deep. Maybe a meter and a half. No matter what, I would say we worked pretty well.

-Oh, my Gosh! - I thought - Who is the hero? Why am I so unlucky?

I have already seen the crowd at the end of the plateau, when my foot got stuck in a hamster`s hole. Something stretched in my leg, crunched, and I ended up on all four.

-Fuck!- I cried, feeling the tears of pain in my eyes. But, you know, the thirst for gold was stronger than pain. I just kept crawling, squirming like a worm.
- Show me the gold! - I whispered plaintively, squizzed through the fence of legs. The bloody suckers finally noticed me. After all, a few guys raised me and helped me see the scene.
Two human skeletons lay in a grave beside each other. The warrior wore a half-rotten helmet, and the woman. She was adorned with large gold rings at her temples. There was also some stuff, like a copper cauldron, horse harnesses, and arrowheads. It looked stunning.
- Kipchaks - said our professor confidently - the steppe nomads.

-What about the Scythians? - asked the red-haired girl-hero. I used to like her.
- It's a pity, but they are not. This is a sample of the so-called 'intake burial,' in which the more modern Kipchak grave appears in the oldest time layer.
He shrugged, smiling.
-Don't worry about Scythians, Anastaisha. Just keep digging deeply.
All burst into laughter. Our professor was a funny guy.

Here, I should make one remark. All human skeletons found on the expedition must be described, drawn, and documented in the report. It is the rule. And another one. Bones came to the rubbish, but skulls must be saved. So we did it. Skulls and finds were taken to the camp, and bones, you guess what we did. Right. A little bit of Shakespeare, a little bit of “Treasure Island”, a few savage dances on the top of the hill, and all that jazz. We were young, and we liked to have fun.
As it occurred, not too long.

It is said that the strange things start at night. So it does. I woke up after midnight cuz something walked among the tents. Firstly, I thought that a guy from another tent had been going to piss, but the steps sounded odd. Heavy, slow like a sleepwalker has. My grandma did the same before she passed.

A dry twig cracks. Sniffles, pants. It seemed like someone was looking for something, and just another minute, he would glance into the tent. Instantly, I noticed that none of my mates were sleeping either. A blood-freezing sense of terror got the better of us. I felt goosebumps on my neck.
- What is this fuck?! - whispered one of us.
Awful steps outside stopped. I don't know how long that shit lasted. All has suddenly gone as it started, and after all, we slept.

-Did you hear something odd that night? - I was asking others in the morning, while we gathered for washing and having breakfast.

-I was sleeping like a dog - answered one.

-We didn`t - said others.

- I heard.

I turned around. It was my red-haired hero, and she was grinning suspiciously.

-Stop rambling and go to work quickly!

That morning, our professor was not in the mood. I got that the jokes ended.

It lasted for three terrible nights. We slept poorly and kept the shovels and pickaxes close by. When these odd steps and sniffs came to our tent, we would jump out all together, waving our weapons and shouting into the night. So the camp immediately awoke. It happened a few times during the night.
- They are just the hedgehogs! - angry yelping the professor from his tent - Don't panic! Back into the tents!
But panic slowly spread around. It was something like a primitive horror of the cavemen. Cold hugs of the Great Snake. But do not even think we were cowards.

The next morning, no one worked properly. And the next too. There was no laugh, no guitar near the fire in the evening. Even my read-headed hero stopped grinning. Professor? It was painful to look at him. Besides that, my leg was swollen and very painful.

-Pack your stuff. I will take you to the hospital - the Professor said irritably - your pals handle hedgehogs without you, Ghost Buster!

Have I already told you he was a clever guy?

We were riding in his old van, shaking at the potholes of the country road. Honestly, I didn`t mind leaving the camp. I loved my limb and should take care of it. Why not?

Later, they said that all shit ended when we left the camp. Probably, they were. I could not check it. But there was one thing in Van's rear seat. The old Soviet hiking backpack. It was covered in patches and so worn out that it was time to throw it away. It was the professor's mascot, I thought. It wasn't full, but on the potholes, something strangely rattled inside. Suspisiously rattled. The professor stopped the van at the gas station, even though the dashboard gauge showed more than half a tank. Now I think he did it deliberately. He knew all about guys like me. Anyway, he got out, and I immediately pulled the rope of the damned backpack.
I guess you know what I saw inside.

Door clanks. The Professor brings me hot dog.

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60. MYSTERY HOUSE

14 Years ago I realised my dream. I bought a very old thatched cottage, build around 1858.
That was my dream. When I came into this house, all the rooms where like an illustration which I made month ago.
I bought the house and start to live there.
In my dining room, was my computer in one corner.
But one day, I felt such a coldness climbed always in my body, when I was sitting there.
First time I thought ..my be the heating was to low..but next days it was always the same.
Some weeks later I fell over a very sharp wood in my garden.
Days later I lit a scented candle to relax but after a few minutes I felt that my soul is falling in a black hole. I was so skirt and put the candle out strait away
I told my girlfriend and she said " change the place of your computer "
Something mysterious is in this room.
I did so, and I never where sitting in this corner again.
But than 2 weeks later, I had a real bad car accident and it was not far away that I lost my live.
After than I had an accident in the bus.
This time I was thinking to sell the house and read books about, what to do again mistery in a house. I placed colloidal silver in each corner.
I never had an accident again after I made this.
But than I sold my dream and now i feel much better.

Sorry for bad English

Greetings Rosemarie Macht

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61. The Big Dipper

Part 1

One afternoon, my friends and I were walking down the stairs of our school, chatting merrily. Maybe we were so merry that we forgot to walk down only five sets of stairs. We just kept walking and walking, and it became darker and darker. Soon, we realized something was wrong. When we turned back, the tiger poster's eyes seemed to be following us.

Once we returned, everything became even weirder. In front of us was a group of people with dark skin, tattoos, no hair, and no noses. It turned out that our walking down the stairs had woken the special nomadic people who only migrate once every thousand years.

Part 2

I was curious. As soon as I got home, I did some research. There had been only one sighting, exactly one thousand years ago, made by Dr. Chan in Sichuan, China. After that, I looked up his death. It simply said: Dr. Chan was last seen in bed, with red spots all over his face, muttering about "the curse." Cause of death: Unknown.

The next day, we skipped school and went to Sichuan. We made an amazing discovery: their route was shaped exactly like the Big Dipper.

Finally, we found a row of huts. We were thirsty and hungry. Some brave kids went in, and when they got out, they were speechless.

Two hours later, everyone except me was wandering around, eyes closed, muttering about "the curse."

Part 3

My friends were dropping like flies! Three of them died an hour ago, and the other died just now. I'm not sure if I can go on my own. But I did.

I found another hut and was about to go in, but I was drawn to the unfinished building next to it. I couldn't help going in. The people there were nice to me and showed me to my room. As I checked for bugs, I noticed something outside my window. To me, it looked like clothes.

Part 4

I simply needed to get out. Humans need fresh air, remember? As I was chilling, I saw two figures running. I caught up to them and asked, "What's the matter?" In unison, they turned around. They had no faces and no hair, and on their foreheads was the shape of the Big Dipper.

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62. A pact with three Yoruba Gods

In September of last year, I made a pact with three Yoruba Gods or Orisha Gods (Obatala, Eleggua, and Oshun). The reason was that I was desperate to protect my kids against all the mass shootings at schools. So, I went to a crossroads and spoke to the Gods with a firm voice, "Please protect my kids and don't let bad happen to them, and also bring them safe and alive with us, and in return, I will paint six canvases, two for each god. Give me until the end of the year to finish them all." Then I opened my eyes and went on. To be more precise, by November, I had finished only two out of the six canvases, but life and the daily routine got me distracted; well, honestly, I got a bit lazy. Then one night, after tucking my kids in bed, I shut the door, wishing them a good night. Then I headed to my room. My wife was in the W.C. All of a sudden, right after turning the TV on, I heard three loud knocks right outside of my bedroom, but it sounded like a heavy hand trying to burst into my room. I quickly jump out of bed, still in undies and really upset, because I thought one of my kids was playing with my door. My surprise was that my wife and kids were already in the corridor looking at each other, saying, "What was that?" I said, "Let me check outside," so I went to the front door and opened it, but there was not a single soul on the lookout. I went inside and checked the clock; it was 12:10 A.M., so we all went back to bed and tried to get some sleep. "Probably that was the branches hitting the roof." That's what I told my kids, but of course, they didn't believe me. The following morning, I put the pieces together, and my conclusion was that the knocking was the Orishas trying to remind me, "Hey,

don't slack off, get your ass and paint." After that gruesome and inexplicable night, I went back to finish part of my pact. By December, the work was finished. To this day, my wife and I keep chatting about what really happened and why the three knocking and worse, what would happen if I didn't finish part of my deal? If you guys are interested, you can see them on my Instagram as @elshinogames. The canvases are three in a symbolic style and three in an abstract style. I name them "Obatala", "Elegua", and "Oshun". P. S If any of you make a pact with any God, make sure you promise something that is in your power to do, or do NOT DO ANY PACTS WITH NO ONE. Hope you guys like it and GOODBYE, BYE, BYE, Bye, bye, bye.

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63. Strange noises

My story began more than 30 years ago, when I was a kid, I'm 44. At that time, it was usual to go to my grandparents' house, during the holidays. They lived on a small farm in the countryside, in a remote place. The nearest city was 3 kilometers ahead, the neighbor's house distance was more than hundred meters, and the house, at night, was surrounded by the sounds of nature.

As usual, I went there on a holiday, but it was not a common holiday, it was a Christian holiday, called here in Brazil "Periodo de Quaresma". For the elderly people, especially at that time, it is a period where supernatural cases happen with more frequency and intensity, especially in the middle of nowhere.

I remember that it was quieter than usual. I was in the living room with my uncle watching TV, my aunt was in the kitchen reading, and my grandma sleeping. The house had a special place, the place where my grandma had religious things such as saint images, the bible and candles. She was very religious.

That night, I started to hear a low and small noise from the outside, coming from the south of the house. My uncle suddenly got up and went quickly to the kitchen asking my aunt about the strange noises, she answered "Yes, I'm listening". For the next few seconds, the noise was closer to the house, and closer, and closer and started to run faster, and faster, and faster … the sounds increased, louder and louder … creating a real scary atmosphere. The sounds were like a fight between creatures running faster and louder around the house, trying to find some door or window to get in.

At this moment I was hugging my aunt so strongly, trying to close my ears with my hands. My uncle was checking all the doors and windows. I don't know how long this moment took, but the most important thing that I remember was my grandma praying in front of the holy place on her knees and a crucifix in one hand. After some seconds the sound completely disappeared.

I don't remember what happened in the next hours of that night, but I believe that my brain probably turned off by fear to protect myself.

Next day I got up looking for answers, but no one said a word about that night.

This is my story, I hope you enjoyed it.

Cesar.

P.S. A photo of the place. The house is behind the gate.

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64. "What mother? Why are you shouting?"

I remember I was around 13 years old when this happened . My family and I had just moved to our new house.We are actually still living in the same house for almost 25 years now . Despite with what happened we had never left our home!

I usually do not believe in ghosts but I perfectly clearly remember that night, I even still remember the day.It was a quite Wednesday evening . I was in my room , laying in my bed, whenll I suddenly I hear my mom calling my name out

At first I did not respond back, until she shout the second time screaming my name loudly , I got up freaking out and replied : "what mother? why are you shouting ? "

I swear I hear her voice answering back « saying what are you doing ? Where are you ? Come out your room «

Like any daughter forcing myself getting up my bed , walking out my room , shouting « Mom, Mooom , Moooom , «

But my mother is not at home !!!

My little sister has noticed that ai was talking to someone and that she is been telling that you were talking to who?

I told her, » Mom was screaming calling me to go down, and come out of my room !!!!

My sister looked at me with ,like she is the one who sees the ghost !!

saying « No ,.... nobody at home it was just me and her !@!

I made my sister sleep next to me for about two weeks , till I reassured myself to be normal a..again

Though , the voice keep repeating in my head :@

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65. The baby is sleeping

In the early 1960s, my husband and I loved to travel. That year, we decided to explore Turkey more deeply than ever before. We packed our car with everything we needed—our tent, cooking supplies, blankets—and set off with our two young children, just five and three years old.

We drove across Europe—through Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria—until we finally reached Turkey. We had been there before and loved it, but this time we wanted to go further, away from cities and into the unknown.

We spent a few peaceful days by the Black Sea before continuing our journey. Eventually, we drove so far into the countryside, near the Iranian border, that the roads disappeared. There were no houses, no people, no animals—only endless land and silence.

We stopped near a small river and decided to stay for a few days. We set up our tent and told ourselves we had enough food. It felt as if we were completely alone in the world.

That night, I woke up to a sound that didn't belong there.

Voices.

Low, distant at first—but real.

My husband heard them too. We lay still, listening, our hearts pounding. Then came the sharp crack of gunfire.

I was certain we had no chance. Whoever they were, they had found us.

My husband slowly sat up. I grabbed his arm, shaking, but he gently pulled away. I had never been so afraid in my life.

He moved to the entrance of the tent and opened it.

The voices stopped.

Then, in a calm, steady voice, he said,

"Shhh."

He raised his finger to his lips.

"The baby is sleeping."

I held my breath, frozen.

There was a moment of silence.

Then—I heard movement.

Not running. Not shouting.

Just quiet shifting.

The men stood there.

My husband told me later that they looked at him… and slowly nodded their heads, as if they understood.

And then, without a word, they turned and disappeared into the darkness.

We didn't sleep again that night. At the first light of dawn, we packed everything as quickly as we could and drove away without looking back.

We never saw those men again.

But even now, I still think about that moment—how close they were, how easily things could have gone differently…

…and why they chose to leave.

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66. I grabbed an axe

It was about 17 years ago. I had just finished university; I got married, and for our fifth wedding anniversary, my parents gave me a cottage (dacha) —a country house. They gave it to me near their own cottage. It was summer, and we had just planted many different seeds, because for us, the cottage was not just a place to relax, but also a garden. We grew trees and planted crops. That year, at my parents' cottage, we planted a huge variety. We grew melons, watermelons, courgettes, cucumbers, and so many tomatoes—not to mention the fruit trees: apples and pears, which had a wonderful yield. I was given the cottage at the start of August. Of course, it was brand new, just built, and nothing was growing yet except old bushes.

Sadly, during this time, my father was taken into hospital with a stomach ulcer; he had surgery, and he couldn't travel. It turned out that at the time, I didn't know how to drive. But it wasn't too difficult to get to the cottage; I just needed to take the train about 1 hour from the station and walk about 25 minutes on foot. I was in a really good mood, and I decided that, since my father couldn't go, and my mother didn't go without him, I would go with my husband. Unfortunately, he had to work, so he couldn't join me. It was a bank holiday.
I made the journey on my own, quite well, without any issues. I arrived at my parents' cottage, saw how much produce we had, and I decided I would pick some things the next day and return on the first train. I was in a really good mood; I took a watermelon from the parents' garden, ate half of it, and called my friends to say I was alone.
I wasn't scared; I felt cheerful and full of energy. After all, it was the first time I had gone alone. My friends said, "If you feel scared or lonely, call us, and we'll come to you."
They were good friends, and we stayed in touch every hour or so. I told them it was fine, and they said, "We've decided to come anyway." This couple were really good friends, but they often promised a lot, sometimes doing it, sometimes delaying it until the next day or even a month later. Everything was fine until it got dark. The thing is, my parents bought the cottage in a place quite unfamiliar to me. There were a few other cottages—possibly neighbours—but while it was light, it was very quiet, as if no one was there, as if everyone had stayed in the city. When it got dark, the neighbours came out, having barbecues or something. I couldn't see them, but I heard songs and noisy chatter, and I realised there were many people around me.

Once it got dark, I was truly frightened - some noise in the bushes and I locked myself inside the cottage. After I rushed back inside, I locked every bolt and jumped onto the bed in the darkness, listening to the rustling—was it a thief sneaking onto the grounds, or maybe a wild animal?

I called my friends and whispered that someone is here... they reinsured me that they are coming... ....But they had missed the 6 p.m. train; they said there was another train at 9 p.m., the last one.
Oh my Gosh!!! I was truly terrified by this news—that they might not make it.
After half an hour I calmed down a bit when they called to say they were at the station, that they had bought the tickets, and that everything was fine. We were still on the phone as they travelled; the train was slightly delayed, but they said we shouldn't worry, and soon they would be on their way. Everything was fine. I decided to prepare a special dinner for them since they would come to me, I was

sure of it. Most importantly, I didn't want to worry, because I was pregnant—probably about 2-3 weeks along. I already knew from the doctor.
I calmed down, went to prepare a lovely dinner, and once I had everything ready, I felt much better. The neighbours' sounds didn't bother me anymore; there were cheerful songs, even some disco music in the distance. I wasn't afraid; I knew my friends were close by, and I just felt pretty good. But…

...by the time it was half past eleven, my friends still hadn't arrived. I called them again, and they said the train had just arrived; they were just leaving the station. I said, "Oh, that's great. I'll guide you; I'll tell you which way to go." They asked if I could meet them, as they were getting lost in the dark. I told them I couldn't come; I was too scared. They said, "Alright, we'll try on our own," and so they set off as a couple, following my directions. After about 30 or 40 minutes, I checked again, and they still weren't there. I called them back, and they said, "You know, maybe we went the wrong way to the lake." I said, "What lake? There shouldn't be a lake; just come back to the station where you arrived." I was so scared. But then I thought, "At least I'm have a roof and quite safe from wild animals and my friends will have to sleep outside, where was raining , since there were no trains left home at all." And Suddenly.....

...I put on an old coat, and for some reason, I grabbed an axe. I felt a kind of strength; I don't know why, but it was as if this axe carried me forward and I become super brave. It was like a spirit has come into my body. We were constantly on the phone, talking as I walked. I passed one stranger, but I wasn't afraid, of course, with the axe, it led me to my friends. I reached them, and we laughed together afterwards. They asked why I had brought the axe, and I just said, "I don't know, maybe in case of some wild animal or something." And we walked back, and we passed that same man again. He said when he saw us with the axe, he was absolutely stunned, frozen,—what was a person doing with an axe at the station at night?some crime???

It took about half an hour, and they said, "If you hadn't stayed on the phone with us, we would never have believed you could reach the station in 10 minutes."

when my friends and I returned dacha and had a lovely meal, we heard that same rustling once more. But this time, my friend's husband went outside, looked, and it turned out it was a family of hedgehogs.

Alona

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67. A shadow visited

Many years ago just after my beloved grandma passed away, I woke up in the middle of the night fully awake and I saw somebody sitting at the edge of my bed. I broke out in a cold sweat when I realised the shadow resembled my late grandma. She stayed completely still. I rubbed my eyes to check if I was seeing properly, but when I looked again, the shadow was gone. The next day, my sister told me she had dreamed that our grandma visited her — and that was the most disturbing part😊

Kamila

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68. Grandma's soul

I left my home country long ago and settled down in a neighbouring country. It wasn't easy to visit my childhood home often, though. The journey would be time consuming and exhausting.
The story I want to tell you happened back in summer 2011. I had two sons 5 and 9 years old and a newborn baby daughter.
An accident happened to my elderly grandma who lived far away in my hometown. She tripped over, fell down and got her hip broken. That made her bedridden. My family and I were about to set off to visit her but we didn't manage because she passed away. I was mourning and grieving for her tremendously. My grandma had taken significant part in raising me and been very kind and supportive of me. I kept myself busy with my kids thinking and crying about my grandma and regretting not visiting her. At some moment a strange smell wafted into my room. I could smell it unbelievably vividly. I just felt in my bones it had to do with my granny. As soon as I found the time to call my mum, I got to know from her that at the very moment body of my grandma had been washed with that special smelly substance that usually was used for that purpose. And somehow I was able to detect it being far away and unaware of any detail of that procedure.
Needless to say that it felt really uncanny but soothing. It was like a visit of my grandma's soul to give me her last warm hug. Then in a few days she came over one more time in my night dream to say her farewells. In fact, that happened on the

ninth day after she'd left us. It was an exceptionally clear dream that I'd ever experienced in my life in contrast to my usual blurry ones close to aphantasia-ish images.

Liudmyla

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69. Smoke

My mother has been living alone since my father passed away too soon 16 years ago now, and her flat is upstairs from mine in the same building.

One night, it must have been 11pm, my husband and I were sleeping when our neighbours rang our doorbell to warned us that there was a smell of smoke coming from my mother's flat. We instantly ran upstairs and knocked loudly on my mum's door to wake her up and opened the door and the windows to let some fresh air in.

It turned out that she had left a pot with some soup to heat on the stove and then fell asleep, and the smoke had been spreading all over the house for hours: as time went by, my mother became less and less conscious, ending up feeling numb and sleepy and on the verge of passing out.

I don't even imagine what it could have happened if no one had passed by mother's flat in time to raise the alarm!

Given the serendipity of the events (our neighbours accidentally going up the stairs rather than the lift at a late and unusual hour), I want to believe that my father was taking care of my mother from the afterlife, but maybe it's just my catholic and religious side speaking!
I'm aware that the story doesn't involve ghosts or other creepy creatures and I won't mind if I don't win, I'm just happy I've told you about my family.

Laura

Ps: I wrote it all in my own hand, getting help by AI only to check whether a sentence was correct!

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70. Tension

I heard your podcast about the paranormal, and it reminded me of a curious experience I had when I was 20.

At that time, I was living in an old house with my boyfriend. He was very interested in paranormal activity and often talked about his ability to connect with dead people. To be honest, I didn't believe in that kind of gift.

One day, we were in my bedroom. I don't remember why, but he was very angry, and I felt a very bad atmosphere, like there was electricity in the air around us. It was late, and I was exhausted, but I couldn't sleep.

I remember asking my boyfriend what the problem was. We were sitting there in the dark and in silence, with a lot of tension between us. Suddenly, we both felt a kind of strong, heavy energy fill the bedroom. It lasted about five minutes. I was really scared.

I turned the light on, and it disappeared instantly.

We never spoke about it again.

Cécile

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71. Knots in a gold chain

About 12 years ago, my mother died after a long period of Alzheimer disease, very painful for us children. When she passed away, I took some garments from her wardrobe for memory. Since they had not been worn for a long time, I decided to wash them.

About 2/3 years later, I started to experience weird events. I had a gold chain which belonged to my mum and which I used to wear every day and in the evening I used to put it on the top of my bedroom's dresser. In the morning sometimes I found the thin chain with some knots difficult to untie.

I must say that I did not pay much attention to it, specifically I did not relate this odd occurrence to the fact that the chain belonged to my mum. Until one day, I was ready to go out with my ex husband; it was sunny, early spring, I decided to wear

my mum's woolen jacket. I immediately smelt her perfume which spread around my body. I asked my husband if he could smell it and he nodded. It lasted only a few seconds but enough to make me think of the chain knots and relate it to the perfume. What was she trying to ask me? Probably she was still tied to our world (for reasons I can't know) from which she wanted to be freed.

I am catholic and so I thought a good way was to have some masses celebrated for her. Since then these episodes did not occur again. I like to think that my mum's soul is somewhere in peace and happy that her daughter was able to interpret her need.

Emma from Rome

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72. I can run to the end of the corner on the street!

I had an unusual experience when my mother-in-law passed away about 20 years ago. She had been struggling with blood cancer for almost 7 months. Her situation wasn't getting better.At the end of the year, she was at home because the hospital let her spend her time with her family during the New Year Holiday.

However, my husband was not able to stay with her because he worked overseas and couldn't get a day off. Two days before the end of the year, December 30, her condition was getting worse and I called him to come back to see her. Fortunately, he was able to get a ticket and came to see her on December 31. She was so happy to see him and said that she felt much better. He was the person she really wanted to see in the world, so I believed this meeting would make her get better.

We spent 3 days talking and having Japanese traditional dishes together. The new year started, and the morning he had to go back to work, he and I were eating breakfast at the table. She came to the dining room and said "I feel much better, so you don't worry about me anymore. I can run to the end of the corner on the street. Hahaha!"

Soon after seeing him off at the entrance, she told me that she felt tired and wanted to go back to bed again. After that she was getting worse and worse and a few days later, she had to go to the hospital again. One month later , she passed away without seeing him again.

I believe something we can't explain can happen, especially the last minutes of people's lives.

A ninja, from Japan

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73. THE APPLE

This story is not about how I ended up renting a tiny room in an old house in a foreign country, starting my life from scratch, without money, without a job, without anything but hope…
This story is about one of the many endless evenings when I was getting ready to go to bed without having put anything in my mouth all day.
The windows of the house overlooked a garden shared by the other occupants of the guesthouse. I was about to draw the curtains when a movement caught my eye. A man was approaching, a paper bag of groceries tucked under his arm. As he walked, something round and green slipped off his bag and dropped soundlessly onto the grass.
An apple!
He didn't notice. A large joyful dog rushed toward him,wagging its tail, demanding his attention, and the man, laughing, disappeared inside the house with the animal.
I remained at the window.
The apple lay there, that juicy, crisp, sweet, mouthwatering apple. My stomach tightened with an insistent growling. When had I last eaten one? When had I last eaten anything that wasn't measured or counted?
For a moment, the impulse was simple: go down, pick it up, eat it.
But another thought followed immediately, stronger than hunger. What if someone saw me? What would it make of me? Me, stealing fallen fruit in the dark? The shame of it held me back. No. I would wait. I would wait until night had settled completely, until I could move unseen.
To distract myself, I turned on the television. A newsreader spoke rapidly in a language that still felt foreign in my ears, words passing over me without meaning. None of it reached me. My thoughts remained outside, circling the same small object lying in the grass just beyond my reach.
At last, darkness deepened, and the garden sank into shadow. The moon rose, pale and watchful, the only witness to the quiet comings and goings below.
I stood, moved to the window. Just as I reached for the door, something shifted in the garden.
There, deep in the garden - two points of light.
Eyes.

They hovered, unmoving, fixed in my direction. Around them, a larger shape, indistinct, heavy, unnaturally still. I froze. What was it?If it was an animal, it was too large. Nothing like that belonged here. My mind, worn by hunger and fatigue, began to imagine things that could not be named.
The eyes did not move, they simply watched holding me back.
Too tired and reluctant to take any risks, I sank down beside the window and drifted into a shallow, uneasy sleep.
When I woke, it was still dark. The moon had climbed higher now, casting a cold light across the garden. I looked again.
Nothing.
No eyes. No sign of the menacing shape. Only the deepened silence and the faint outline of the apple, still resting where it had fallen.
This time, I didn't hesitate.
I opened the door and stepped outside, crossing the few steps that had seemed, moments before, impossibly far.
Then suddenly,the two bright points flared into life again, something sprang from the bushes, brushing past me in a blur of movement.
I recoiled, and stumbled back inside, slamming the door behind me.
In the silence I could hear my heart pounding.
It took only a moment for reason to catch up with fear. A cat. Nothing more than a cat. The shadows - just bushes, stretched and distorted by the moonlight.
I let out a relieved breath laughing in disbelief.
Then, determined now, I opened the door once more and walked back into the garden. This time, there was no hesitation. I reached the spot, bent down, and, with trembling fingers, picked up the object I had desired for so long.
Soft.
Round.
Weightless.
Not an apple…
By Goa

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74. The bridge

My story for this one is probably nothing special, but it felt very personally for me back then.
It happened a little over 10 years ago when I moved from my hometown to the capital of the country (it takes 8 hours of flight to get from one place to another and it's the same time difference - my hometown is eight hours ahead). I left my parents

behind, I was heartbroken feeling that I couldn't help them moving with me. But I would give a call home and talk to my dad every day in the mornings while I was commuting to work.

My hometown is just next to the sea, and my dad used to go fishing with his partner every so often. My family struggled with money, and groceries were so expensive that it helped a bit to go and get some fish to cook at home or to sell to make a little of extra money.
So this was another night on the weekday when I had this dream: I was walking with my dad (we used to walk a lot) and we neared the bridge (not built by humans but it was of a natural origin, kind of made of rocks and soils).

This bridge span over some gorge. I only could guess what laid on the bottom of it, but I remember that I imagined, not really seeing it, that it was a narrow shallow creek with banks. So we decided to cross the bridge. At this moment my dad did an unexpected and strange thing - to my shock he laid down and started rolling on the bridge instead of just walking on it. Puzzled I shouted "what are you doing?".

There was no answer and he just silently rolled over and fell of the bridge. I was terrified, I was afraid to come closer to the edge and look down. Finally I just turned and walked away. I didn't check. At this moment I woke up terrified and in tears. The feelings were as if it had actually happened and I leaved through the whole experience. I was terrified of my father falling and ashamed of my conduct.

I couldn't believe I just left him there and walked away, I was sure I would never act like this in real life.

I tried to call my father right away and couldn't reach him, I decided to call him later again on my way to work. Later I called again, he answered and told me he would call back.

Perplexed I waited and after a while I finally heard from him. He sounded uneasy. My dad explained to me, trying to avoid making me worried, that earlier that morning he in his boat was fishing far away from the shore. Suddenly the boat just tipped over and he found himself in the coldness of the northern sea. He struggled to stay afloat and was out of strength in minutes.

Desperate he started praying to God saying that he wouldn't make it without his help. Suddenly he felt a piece of rock under his feet, and he could stand on it. With

support of this rock my father managed somehow to turn the boat back over and get on it. He had to row back because that day his partner was cheap and filled the boat motor half way with the gas and it ran out of fuel. My father was very sick that day, he had body temperature nearing 40°C.

Fortunately my aunt lived not far from our home and looked after my dad (frankly I didn't remember where my mum was at that time). My father got better in the next few days and never spoke to his partner since that day.

I told him that I had this weird dream this exact morning. We both agree that my dream felt as a sort of a premonition of the actual event. To my concern over my behaviour (that I didn't look and walked away) he replied "of course you didn't check, of course you walked away, you simply couldn't, because you were no longer there in our hometown and could do nothing).

So it made two stories in one - mine with my dream and my dad's miraculous survival.

Here is a bonus one which I somehow missed when I was collecting all the stories sent to me.

75. The Disappearing Chocolate Bar

One Sunday morning, we were about to go to the church, and my brother and I were standing in the kitchen, dressed up and ready to leave, just waiting for our parents to head off.

My brother then took a chocolate bar - one of those little “Ritter Sport” ones with only four pieces, held it out in his hand and told me he would make it disappear.

Then he mumbled a kind of magic sentence like “Abra cadabra – the chocolate is gone now”. I can picture him standing there in that brown velvet jacket with an Olympic ring sticker in a golden colour on it. He slipped it into his jacket – held his hands out and grinned – “now it’s gone”.

I laughed at him, because it was very obvious to me, that he had just put it in the inside pocket of his jacket. He insisted that it had really disappeared. I told him to

show me the inside pocket and I touched at it – but no - the chocolate wasn't there. He was very proud of himself and proclaimed that he had ascended it into the universe, or something like that. I told him not to be stupid and that I exactly know that this is impossible, to be honest I wasn't totally certain.

But after a short time he himself got a bit unsure and started looking for the chocolate bar, because it actually wasn't in the pocket of his jacket. We than both started searching in the sleeves of his jacket, in his trousers, then under the table, but we couldn't find it anywhere. We stared at each other in disbelief. Where was it?

We had to leave at one point but later on, we even searched the whole kitchen – nothing. We actually never found it. My brother was absolutely convinced that he had really made it disappear. I couldn't believe that, but I had no explanation where it had gone.

Until today - maybe we had had a ghost chocolatier in our kitchen who simply took that amazing opportunity to grab our chocolate bar, eat it and rest in peace ever since 😊

-Ilona