

## Chapter (undecided): The Campfire

The story finished, we sat with the campfire between us, not speaking.

The silence of the woods was palpable, where were the animals, the insects?

Across from me, his eyes absorbed the fire.

He spoke suddenly.

"Do you believe in ghosts?"

His words hung alone in the air; the weight of the question demanded an answer in the silence.

"No." I replied, anxious.

Silence.

"When I was around eight", he began, not looking at me, "I was visiting with my grandmother, and staying in one of her guest bedrooms. Well, one night, around three in the morning, I got a visit from my grandfather, randomly, in the middle of the night.

He just... opened my door, with this big smile on his face, like he was happy to see me.

And he stood there, not saying anything... just staring, and smiling.

Eventually, I just shut my eyes and covered my head with my sheets, but I heard him come closer... heard his footsteps stopping just beside my bed, right next to me."

I looked at him. Confused by the sudden change in topic.

"Why hadn't he said anything?" I asked.

He looked at me then, for the first time, and in his eyes, I saw nothing but a blank emptiness.

"My grandfather had died that evening,"

Sound beyond the trees froze my words of response, and I turned to look in the direction of what I had heard, of what sounded like movement. Heavy, movement.

I turned back, terrified, but He was gone. Somewhere in the distance, I heard him scream.

- *Headlights*, a short story