

THE EYE STEALER

BY ZAYAH SHORE

It's a cool and dark night. The stars are out and the crickets are chirping as the trees lean in to listen to our campfire.

"And then, all of a sudden, a monkey jumps out of the closet and screams, 'I got you where I want you now I'm gonna eat you!'" My friend wiggles her fingers at me.

I laugh, "Sasha, come on, that wasn't scary."

She smiles back at me. "Well, I thought it was great."

"Okay, who's next?" Kaleea stands up and focuses her gaze on the fire.

"My uncle told me about this mystery that went on in this town for years. It was about how on every blue moon people disappear in these very same woods. When they come back days later, their eyes are gone."

"Their eyes?" Sasha whispers.

Kaleea looks at us through the fire. The shadows of the night dance across her face. "Yes."

Sasha and I exchange a questioning look.

"My uncle actually knew a group of kids who went into this forest on the blue moon. They had no idea what was coming - The Eye Stealer got them!"

I look over to Sasha. She raises an eyebrow and I shrug my shoulders.



"Who's The Eye Stealer?" I ask.

"A terrible monster who changes into the shape of its victim. But it has never learned how to replicate the eyes so it steals them."

Kaleea slowly sits back down as we absorb her story.

"It's just a cautionary tale for when we go out in the woods, right?" I say, trying to convince the little fear coming up inside me.

"Who knows? No one knows what goes on in this forest at night." A ding goes off on my phone. We all jump and laugh at our nervousness. It's my curfew reminder.

"Sorry guys, I have to go." I wave goodbye and set off on the trail leading back home. As I turn on my flashlight, I notice a text from my mom telling me to look at the full moon. I furrow my brow. I type, 'Didn't we already have a full moon this month?'

Three dots appear on my screen. 'I guess you're right! It's a blue moon then! So cool.'

I gasp, feeling paranoia bubbling up inside me. I start to walk faster. I hear another pair of footsteps syncing with mine, I turn my flashlight behind me. Standing there is.... Me? I look closer. How could that be? I don't stay there to find out. I sprint to the edge of the woods. I hear it chase after me. I trip and fall to the ground. It flips me to my back, pinning my arms.

"It's been so long." Its voice sounds so far away. The lump of fear in my throat keeps me from screaming. "You and your friends will be a reminder," Its familiar hand reaches towards my face. "to never come in my forest again."

