

99 WRITING

The Woods

by Jesus Sanchez

TYPE
NARRATIVE

We had been walking for three hours, and now it was completely dark. All that we had was one flashlight, but we had run out of batteries. It was very windy, and the only sound was the rustling of leaves and the swaying of tree branches. Even though we had been walking for hours, the surroundings looked the same as if we had been walking the same path this whole time. We decided to stop because we had started getting tired. My brother was tired of walking and wanted to find a way back, so he made a path into the woods. I told him to not do it, but my warnings did not stop him. As I watched him moving toward the woods, I told him that I would stay on the path. He kept walking. I then yelled for him to come back, but he kept walking, leaving me worried about his safety and if he could find his way back. As he left I started to feel awkward as if something was near me. It only took three minutes and I started calling his name, but I

didn't get a response back.

Then, I started to panic, and the worst possible scenarios played out in my mind. I called him again, louder than before, and I heard something that would mark me forever – the roar of an animal. The roar was similar to that of a tiger. I froze. My mind returned to our arrival at the camping site, where a native told us a story about a creature that lived in the woods. In his story, he believed it was not some monster or creature in the woods, but an old witch who was immortal. He told us that this witch could transform into a beast. Every detail of this story was replaying over and over in my mind as I stood paralyzed, trying to determine the distance and direction of that roar. I wanted to call out for my brother, but I didn't want to alert the roar's owner to my location.

Then I remember another part of that story – the witch could play mind games with people, controlling their thoughts. It had all made sense. The creature, or witch, was real. The long walk through the path was his mind games with us, watching us the entire time. Now I was afraid and alone. I decided to run, and as I started to run away I heard the roars getting closer and closer, and then I woke up in the woods.