

**By Lori Fuller**

Church Magazines  
(Based on a true story)

*"If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things" (Articles of Faith 1:13).*

I was really late, and my sister was asleep, but I was still up reading. I held my book and flashlight under the covers. If Mom or Dad came to see if I was still awake, I could switch off my flashlight, close my eyes, and they'd never know I wasn't *really* asleep.

I just couldn't put my book down yet. It was full of scary stories, and I had to know what happened next.

*Scritch, scritch.* I jumped. What was that sound? It was coming from my window. It sounded just like in the story I was reading, where a girl was hiding from a ghost in her house.

I shivered as the sound came again. *Scritch, scritch, meow.* I slowly let out my breath. It was just our cat scratching the window. Maybe it was time to put the book down and go to sleep.

I stuck my bookmark between the pages and hid the book under my pillow. Then I switched off the flashlight.

*The books were fun to read. So why wasn't I feeling happy?*

Goodbye to



Now it was totally dark. The bed creaked as I rolled over. What was that shadow in the corner? Had that been there before?

I pulled the covers up over my head and tried to fall asleep. But I couldn't stop thinking about the girl in the story. What would I do if a ghost was in *my* house?!

*Ghosts aren't real*, I told myself. *It's just a story*. I kept telling myself that, and finally I fell asleep.

The next day was a book sale at school. I'd been saving up my chore money for weeks. When it was my class's turn, I went straight to the scary stories.

At the bottom of the stack was a book with an old picture of a creepy house. "I bet it's haunted," I told my friend Julia. I tucked it under my arm and found two other books to try.



**"Is there anything in your life you need to change and fix, beginning tonight?"**

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*"The Greatest Generation of Young Adults," Ensign, May 2015, 68.*

That night I started my new books. I read straight through the first one. You had to read scary stories fast. If you thought about something scary for too long, it just made you more scared.

But the next day, as I started reading the book with the haunted house, I *did* stop to think. I'd been reading scary stories for days. I'd hardly set the books down. I'd hardly even left my room. And my brain was full of lots of scary things. I thought about ghosts and people getting lost in the woods and monsters that tricked and ate you. All that stuff made me scared—even while sitting in my safe room with the sun shining through the window.

I set my book down and took a deep breath. These books didn't make me happy. They didn't make me feel good. I was sad about lots of things, and these books just made me feel worse.

I closed my eyes and leaned against my bed. *Dear Heavenly Father, I prayed, I don't think these scary books are very good for me. Please help me know what to do and to be strong enough to do it.*

When I opened my eyes, I looked down at my new books. "I don't need these," I said. It was time to find something that made me feel happy, not scared and sad.

I picked up the books and pulled the rest of my scary stories off my shelf. It was a lot of books. But I carried them all to our recycling bin. I felt much lighter as I dumped them in.

And when I walked away, I didn't look back. ♦

# Scary Stories

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN SIMONSEN



Turn to page 20 to find some great books to read!