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Shadows

Natalie Randall
natalierandall23@gmail.com

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Ty Koppenhafer
Logan, Utah
December 6, 2017

“Shadows”

Supernatural Religious Legend

Informant:

Ty is in his early twenties and is currently attending Utah State University. He is studying to be an engineer. He’s a carefree guy who loves spending time with other people. He served a two year proselyting mission for the LDS church in Cleveland, Ohio. He got back over the summer of 2017, just a few months before he recounted this experience. He’s a very funny person and is usually not very serious, but when he talks about his faith he’s an easy person to talk to about it.

Context:

I asked him and his roommate to come over to tell me a story. He decided to tell me a ghost story about an experience he had on his mission. The only people around for this was him, his roommate, and me. It was a very low-key situation and he felt very comfortable sharing this experience. Some background of what happened is that on a mission, the missionaries teach people who are interested in the LDS church and they often go to their homes to visit and teach. Such was the case when he and his fellow missionary companion went to visit Dave.

Text:

So we were teaching this guy Dave, he’s super cool. And every time we would go over there, like, everything just fell into our lap, it was like, we would go over and he would be like ‘guys I’m thinkin’ I wanna know where I go after I die’ and everything was just perfect, but we went over one time and it was pretty late, we usually didn’t go over to his house late. And he was just, he was out of his mind. He wanted to kill himself, it was just a really bad situation and we were trying to talk, I was trying to teach him, and there just wasn’t anything good there. So we got out, and I was training a new missionary, and he-uh, as soon as we got out he asked me ‘dude I don’t know what’s going on, but I do not feel good’ and I felt the same way, so we hopped on our bikes and we started heading home, and it’s probably about two miles home. And we passed

the town square and I just had this really bad feeling. And I kept looking back at him and every time I looked back, I could see these shadows in the trees that were following him and then as soon as we passed town square, I looked back and we started down this row of trees and one of 'em came down and knocked him off his bike. So I had to come back and I went and got him and it was choking him, it was crazy. It was on top of him choking him, he couldn't breathe. So, it sounds kinda cheesy, we started singing hymns. We got back on our bikes and started going and it felt like they were pushing us forward like the world behind us was folding over top of itself, over top of us, and it was pushing us off our bikes. And they kept showing up in front of us, like they, everything was folding in over top of us and then those shadows, they had faces that were kinda sketchy, but they kept showing up in front of us, so we had to ride between us to get home. It was probably the scariest thing that ever happened to me on my mission.

Texture:

There was a quiet air in my apartment when he was telling the story. The three of us listening were all LDS, so we were more inclined to believe his story. He told it as though he 100% believed it happened. There was no doubt in his mind that he had lived this experience. His tone stayed consistent throughout the story, and he ended it rather abruptly. I could tell that he did not like re-living this experience very much.

Natalie Randall
Utah State University
Introduction to Folklore
Professor Lynne S. McNeill
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