

Stone Ghosts  
By Shyla Prasad

“Mom, why do we have to hide when the lights go out?”, Afriyaz said quietly as her light pink hair and brown eyes shimmered from the sunlight coming through the window. Her mother replied as she cut carrots on the wood counter, “Hun, you’re too young to know...” “Why!?” Afriyaz questioned her mom as she crossed her arms. “Sigh, just go to your room.” Afriyaz’s mom said stiffly. “FINE!” Afriyaz shouted, as she stormed out of the kitchen into the hallway.

The hallway floor was covered in oak wood. The wall was painted in a pale beige, and the sun was shining brightly through the only window at the end of the narrow corridor. Afriyaz continued to walk down the hall. There were no lights in the house. After all, this was a house that had stood for over 70 years. That meant the only sources supplying light in the house were the windows and the fireplace.

Out of nowhere, Afriyaz felt a cold breeze flow past her. She stopped as it sent a chill down her spine. She looked behind her, but she saw nothing out of the ordinary. “That’s strange...” she thought. “Don’t let in the light...” something then whispered in a staticky voice. It sounded like it came from the room next to the kitchen.

“Mom? Did you say something?” Afriyaz asked. “No, what did you hear?” her mom called from the kitchen. Afriyaz replied, “I think it said ‘Don’t let in the light’.” “WHAT!?” Afriyaz, when the lights go out, make sure you open a window.” her mother said. Afriyaz was confused, “Why?” “Just do it! The spirits will eventually go.” her mother insisted. “What do you mean!? I don’t want to make spirits mad! What if they kill me before they go?” Afriyaz yelled.

There was a moment of silence. Afriyaz jumped as she heard blinds shut behind her. Then everything went black, and Afriyaz heard a scream come from the kitchen. She ran into the nearest room she could find and tripped, almost knocking down flower vases, a lamp, and a glass cup! She scrambled along the floor, looking for cover. Eventually, she found a hiding spot under a bed. “Mom’s hurt! Should I open the window in the kitchen? No. I should stay here. I just have to wait a little longer, and then I can check on Mom!”

After what felt like twenty minutes, the blinds in the room Afriyaz was in opened. Afriyaz got out of her hiding spot and gazed around the room, “I-I entered Dad’s room! Of all of the rooms, why’d it have to be his?!” Afriyaz ran out of the room and turned around to face the kitchen. Her eyes widened. “M-Mom? Are y-you okay?” Afriyaz stuttered.

She walked into the kitchen, stepping on something red. It was blood! She took baby steps towards the kitchen counter. It was covered with something ash-like, but it was purple instead of grey. When she walked behind the counter, she found her mother. She was lying on the floor, bleeding, and turning into purple ashes!

“Oh my god!” The blood on the floor was turning to purple ash as well. In fact, EVERYTHING was turning to purple ash! “AHHHHHH! I have to get out of here!!” Afriyaz screamed! Tears streamed down her face as she ran out of the house, “First, I entered Dad’s room, and then Mom died! Now I’m an orphan, I just don’t know what to do!” she thought.

She was too distracted and ran on to the road without thinking! “WATCH OUT!!!” Something heavy pushed her off the road. She slowly got up and noticed what looked like an 18 year boy lying down. His hair was brown like oak, and his eyes were green like the grass on a warm summer day. He was wearing expensive clothing.

“Hey, are you okay..?” Afriyaz said as she gestured to help the boy up. The boy pushed her hand away and said, “I don’t need any help.” The boy said, crawling to his feet. Afriyaz crossed her arms, “Fine. At least tell me your name!” “Yuuto.” the boy said looking annoyed.

“Thanks. But you need to get your stuff together. You can’t just save someone from a car crash, and then act like a jerk!” Afriyaz said. “Says the girl who hasn’t even told me her name, and is covered in blood! Wait, why are you covered in blood?” Yuuto asked accusingly.

“I can’t tell him what happened, he’ll probably think I’m trying to cover up a crime!” Afriyaz thought before replying, “My parents are dead. My mom died right in front of me, that’s why I’m covered in blood. And my name’s Afriyaz. Happy now?” Yuuto’s face turned from annoyed to worried for a split second before switching back to annoyed, “Oh. You can stay over at my house.”

Afriyaz caught the concerned expression and realized he might not actually be a jerk, “Ok, thank you...” They started walking towards a gigantic house! “Woah, that house is huge!” Afriyaz said adoringly. “Like it? It’s mine.” Yuuto said, making Afriyaz stop in her tracks.

“You’ve got to be lying! There’s no way this is your house is yours. You’ve got to prove it!” Afriyaz said. Yuuto smirked, “Heh, okay.” “What’s with that smirk? It looks scary but cute...” Afriyaz thought as Yuuto walked on to the porch of the house.

He pulled out a silver key and opened the door to the house. “NO WAY!!!!” Afriyaz shouted. Yuuto turned around and said, “Come in, I still don’t trust you completely... But, you seem harmless, other than being covered in blood. And you’re drawing attention.” Afriyaz looked around to see if people were staring. She then walked up to Yuuto, and he let her in.

Once they had gotten in, Yuuto immediately sat on the brown couch. The walls were white and the rug was grey. On the walls there were three paintings. One of the paintings was of a teenage girl. The two other paintings were of little boys who looked like twins.

“Hey Yuuto, are these people in these paintings related to you?” Afriyaz asked Yuuto. “Yeah, they’re my ancestors who passed away at a very young age.” Yuuto answered. Afriyaz leaned close and read the nameplates on the paintings. The girl’s name was Claudia Smith, and the two boys were Blade Smith and Zen Smith. There were wooden stairs in the corner of the living room leading upstairs. The house was also neatly organized like a how a castle in fairytales would be.

Afriyaz was about to sit until Yuuto said, “Nu- uh. You’re going to take a shower now. I’m not going to get blood on my couch.” “Fine. I do feel disgusting anyway.” Afriyaz said as she headed towards the staircase, and walked up the stairs feeling annoyed. “Hey. You need directions. First you walk to the end of the hall, then go left, and then you go right-”

“I GET IT!” Afriyaz shouted, feeling VERY annoyed! She quickly vanished into the hallway, and followed the directions she was told. “Wait, where is the bathroom? There’s like 7 rooms here!” Afriyaz thought looking around frantically.

“Maybe I should’ve listened to what Yuuto said... but, he’s a meanie, so I think I did the right thing!” Afriyaz said out loud by accident. “So, you still need my help, huh?” Yuuto said appearing out of nowhere. Afriyaz turned around and shouted, “YOU WERE FOLLOWING ME THE ENTIRE TIME!?! YOU’RE LIKE A STALKER OR SOMETHING!” “I’m a stalker in my own home? That doesn’t make sense.” Yuuto questioned Afriyaz in an impolite but emotionless tone. “It did in my head!” Afriyaz said as she furrowed her eyebrows.

“Sorry, but I can’t read minds.” Yuuto said making Afriyaz even madder. “Ugh! Just let me go shower!” Afriyaz said. “Fine, I can’t even tell what colour your hair is with all that blood.” Yuuto replied.

“Don’t let in the light..” a voice said in the same voice as the last time Afriyaz heard it. TICK! Everything went completely black. “What’s happening? My dad just put in new light bulbs.” Yuuto said confused.

Afriyaz then suddenly grabbed his hand and ran into the closest room, “COME WITH ME!” “What?” Yuuto said almost tripping on his words. Afriyaz found a hiding spot. Yuuto whispered after getting in the hiding spot, “Hey, what’s happening-” “SHHH!” Afriyaz shushed him quietly!

Yuuto wondered, “What is wrong with her, it’s just a blackout! Ugh, I’m getting out.” He then started to get out of the hiding spot. Afriyaz felt him moving and grabbed his hand, “What are you doing?!” Yuuto turned his head, “Getting out of this room.” “No! Don’t do that!” Afriyaz whispered. “Why? If you tell me then I won’t go.” Yuuto questioned quietly. Afriyaz pulled him back into the spot, “I will when the lights turn back on” “Fine...” Yuuto whispered as he slid back in to the hiding spot.

Three or more minutes later the light came back on. Afriyaz and Yuuto got out of the spot and wiped the dust off of themselves. “Now tell me why we had to hide.” Yuuto said. “Fine...You heard that voice right before the lights went out right?” Afriyaz told Yuuto. Yuuto stepped a little closer to Afriyaz, “Yeah, I thought it was just my imagination.” Afriyaz noticed he stepped closer, so she stepped back, “Well you weren’t imagining it! Apparently, that voice is a spirit.” “You mean a ghost? Hah! There’s no such thing as ghosts.” Yuuto scoffed. “Fine then! You won’t get an explanation!” Afriyaz said as she put her hands on her hips.

“I think I already got an explanation. That you’re crazy.” Yuuto said as he walked away. “Hmph! He’s so mean! I’m not even crazy, he’s just making assumptions!” Afriyaz thought as she checked every room to see if it was a bathroom. She eventually found one and got ready for a shower.

Meanwhile, Yuuto was making himself a sandwich as he thought, “Afriyaz is crazy! There’s no such thing as spirits, but that voice did sound real... Eh. It was probably just fake.”

He finished his sandwich just as Afriyaz walked into the living room. She was wearing a pink top along with a pair of jeans. She had grabbed the clothes from a room nearby.

Yuuto stared, "She actually looks cute..." Afriyaz turned to face him, "What are you looking at?" That snapped Yuuto out of his daze. "N-Nothing." He said. Afriyaz wondered, "I wonder if he was still thinking I'm crazy?" "Now you're staring at me." Yuuto smirked. Afriyaz crossed her arms, "Well that's because you probably still think I'm crazy!"

"Obviously, ghosts aren't real!" Yuuto replied as he got off his couch and walked towards the hallway. Afriyaz called out, "Hey wait! Do you live with anyone? You have to have someone else here for such a big house?" Yuuto turned to face Afriyaz, "No, I live alone." He then proceeded to walk farther away. "Now that's crazy!" Afriyaz thought.

She started walking to the kitchen, just as the lights went off again "**DON'T LET IN THE LIGHT.**" a staticky voice called out louder than ever. "WHAT?!" Afriyaz thought while running in the darkness to find a spot to hide. She was hiding under the table in the living room. "Why did it happen again? I wonder how Yuuto is doing?!" She worried.

Just then Afriyaz felt pain sting her shoulder. She felt blood oozing out of it, "Wait, what? How did it get me? Is it because my hiding spot is so bad? I need to find a new spot!" Afriyaz thought, as she got out of her hiding spot quickly. She ran fast in whatever direction. It was pitch black!

Afriyaz eventually ran into something and then tripped and fell. The thing she knocked in to screamed, "Ow!" Afriyaz quickly got up, "Yuuto?! You're okay!" Afriyaz once again took his hand and started dashing. She threw him into a spot to hide and followed. "What-" "SHHHH!" Afriyaz shushed him. They waited for a few minutes. The lights turned on once again before Afriyaz and Yuuto got out of their spot.

Afriyaz turned towards Yuuto, "Are you okay?" She looked to see if he was injured and, to her surprise, he was injured! "Your hand's bleeding!" Afriyaz yelled. Yuuto replied, "Speak for yourself. Your shoulder's bleeding." "That doesn't matter, we have to get cleaned up!" Afriyaz told Yuuto before dragging him to the living room again. "Hey. Watch it, my hand still hurts you know." "As if I didn't know that!"

They cleaned themselves up, walked over to the couch, and plopped down. "Do you think I'm crazy now?" Afriyaz nagged Yuuto quietly. "I honestly don't know..." Yuuto replied reluctantly. He then said, "You know that thing we hear before the lights go out?" Afriyaz looked up, "That thing that says 'Don't let in the light'?" "Yeah, why do you think it says that?" Yuuto said.

"That reminds me, my mom told me this before she died 'When the lights go out, open a window'." Afriyaz responded. Yuuto met her gaze, "Get to the point." "I think we should open the windows! It could probably get rid of them or stop them for a while!" Afriyaz replied excitedly but nervously at the same time.

"Sure, but why not turn on the lights?" Yuuto questioned. Afriyaz looked away, "I don't know if an artificial light source would work, and I'm not willing to try it!" Yuuto said back,

“OK. If this doesn’t work I blame you... Well, that’s if we make it out alive!” Afriyaz felt a shiver down her spine at the thought of dying, “Agh! Don’t scare me like that!” Yuuto yawned, “Well anyway, I’m sleepy, why don’t we call it a day and go to sleep?” “Awww. Fine!” Afriyaz responded.

Afriyaz woke the next morning in a white twin size bed. KNOCK KNOCK! “Mom? You can come in.” Afriyaz said before yawning. A boy with brown fluffy hair walked in, “I’m not your mom.” Afriyaz shot up out of the bed, “Oh! Yuuto, I forgot everything that happened yesterday. I guess I’m still not over mom...” “That’s fine, just get dressed and come downstairs.” Yuuto said as he walked out of the room.

Afriyaz finally finished getting dressed and headed downstairs. “I wonder if Yuuto made breakfast..?” she thought as she had made it down the flight of stairs. “Hey Yuuto.” Yuuto turned to face Afriyaz, “Hi. Go to the table, there’s breakfast there.” Afriyaz walked over the table, “Oh! You made lasagna, I haven’t had that in ages! What’s the special occasion?” Yuuto followed behind Afriyaz, “There’s no special occasion, this is what I have once every week.” Afriyaz thought, “That’s weird! Someone like him being so figured out...” “Anyways, eat.” Yuuto said, breaking her thought. “Right!” Afriyaz responded.

Yuuto finished his meal, “Do you remember what we talked about yesterday?” Afriyaz finished right after Yuuto, “Yeah, we’re going to open the blinds when the lights go out!” “When do you think it’s going to happen? You seem to be experienced with this whole thing.” Yuuto asked Afriyaz. “It’s always been random, and I’m not actually that experienced with this. It only started last year.” Afriyaz answered.

“How did you know what to do the first time?” Yuuto questioned Afriyaz again. Afriyaz had an irritated look on her face, “My mom just told-” TICK! “Just **DON’T** let in the light.” a static voice screeched. Everything went pitch black once again. “The lights went out! I’ll guide us towards the window!” Yuuto said with emotion for once. “Ok!” Afriyaz responded while feeling around for Yuuto’s hand. Afriyaz found Yuuto’s hand, and he started walking.

Afriyaz blushed as she thought, “His hand is so soft... Wait, what am I thinking?! Am I actually getting comfortable with this guy?!” Just then they had made it to the window, and Yuuto flung open the blinds. Afriyaz gasped at the sight she was witnessing. There was a terrifying figure turning to stone, it was a teenage girl that looked about the same age as Afriyaz. “What is that?!” Afriyaz exclaimed in horror. “It could be a spirit...” Yuuto said as he stepped back.

The girl’s hair hung over her face, covering her eyes. Her hair went down to her waist, and she was wearing a long gown that covered her hands. The gown was torn in several places. The girl was very thin, it was almost like she had died of starvation.

“Well, now we know we won’t have any blackouts anymore, but what will we do with this statue?” Afriyaz interrogated Yuuto. “We could put it in a room.” Yuuto answered while shrugging. “I guess so. How are we going to get it into a room though?” Afriyaz once again questioned. “Easy, teamwork.” Yuuto replied. Afriyaz walked over to the statue and started lifting it, “Are you going to help me or what?” Afriyaz said teasingly.

Yuuto walked over to the statue and grabbed hold of it, “What room should we put it in?” “Let’s try a room that’s not in use. I mean like, there’s so many rooms here that there has to be a free room!” Afriyaz responded happily. “Why are you so happy all of a sudden? I thought you said I was a “meanie” earlier.” Yuuto smirked. Afriyaz nearly dropped the statue, “I’M NOT HAPPY! I was just trying to lift my mood!” Yuuto smirked, “Sure.” They managed to get the stone statue of the girl into a room, and strolled back to the living room.

“Hey, you couldn’t finish the question I asked earlier. How did you know what to do the first time you had a blackout?” Yuuto asked  
Afriyaz snarled, “I’ll tell you after you answer my questions! I didn’t ask you because you kept on asking me questions, so I couldn’t ask you any questions!” “Go ahead.” Yuuto replied confidently.

Afriyaz widened her eyes, she had thought he was avoiding questions, “Ok. Why did you let me stay here? You don’t know if I still have a house or not.” Yuuto’s gaze met Afriyaz’s, “I took a guess. You don’t seem like you’d be able to live on your own.” Afriyaz looked away irritated, “Wow. Thanks. We’re on to the next question now.”

“Shoot.” Yuuto said confidently again. Afriyaz widened her eyes, “You mentioned something about your dad changing the lights, if that’s true, why hasn’t he made any appearances? Oh, and, are you rich? I’m wondering how you could afford your house!” Yuuto jumped when he heard the questions Afriyaz asked, Well, I am rich, though I didn’t make the money. My dad... He makes all the money and transfers it to me.”

Afriyaz was not quite satisfied, “But why do you live alone?” Yuuto took a deep breath, “I don’t like my parents at all. I moved as soon as I got the chance to move out. I’m not going to tell you any more than that. I think we’re done here.”

Yuuto got up and left the room. “Did I say something wrong?” Afriyaz wondered worriedly.

“Was I to harsh on her?” Yuuto wondered confusedly. “Maybe I should go talk to her... Wait! Why am I worried about her?! There’s no way I could have feelings for her!” Yuuto’s face turned red at just the thought of liking her.

**“DON’T LET IN THE LIGHT!!!”** a static voice boomed around the house. “WHAT!?” Afriyaz let out a piercing scream as everything had turned pitch black once again. She ran as fast as she could to a nearby window, the only thing stopping her from finding a window was that she hadn’t got used to the house layout yet!

“I hope Yuuto is okay...” Afriyaz wondered as she stopped to take a rest. “Wait! Why do I keep on worrying about him?! I don’t think I have feelings for him... Ah! I need to find a window!!” Afriyaz blushed as she had started running again.

Yuuto whipped open the blinds and turned around to see what looked like a stone statue of a young boy. “Why do I feel like I’ve seen these ghosts before...?” Yuuto wondered suspiciously. “I hope Afriyaz is okay... I honestly think I like her...” Yuuto thought as he blushed.

Afriyaz tripped as she pulled down an entire curtain to let light into the hallway she had ran through. She turned around to see a statue of a young boy. He looked like a kid from the 1970's. "I think I've seen these people before..." Afriyaz wondered. "I can't stop thinking about Yuuto... I-I think I might have feelings for him..." Afriyaz thought as her face turned as bright as tomato.

Afriyaz then walked over to the statue and pushed it into another room. She had found a completely empty room earlier and was surprisingly close to it. Yuuto had done the same, and went looking for Afriyaz right after he'd finished. He decided to tell her he had feelings for her straight away, after all, he never had a crush before.

Afriyaz also went looking for Yuuto. She didn't want to confess unless she had known Yuuto liked her back. Afriyaz searched for him for a while, but had no luck whatsoever. As she opened up a door of a room to look inside for Yuuto, she felt a tap on her shoulder. Afriyaz turned around to see Yuuto standing in front of her.

"Hey, we need to talk." Yuuto said as he tried to look impressive but Afriyaz noticed the bright colour covering his face. "Ok...!" Afriyaz exclaimed with surprise. "I'm going to tell you this to your face, since this has never happened to me before." Yuuto said, scaring Afriyaz about what he was about to say. "I like you." Yuuto said as he blushed even harder.

Afriyaz pinched herself to make sure she wasn't dreaming, "Ow! I-I mean what?" Yuuto said once again but nervously, "I like you, okay?!" Afriyaz smiled wide, "I like you too. I'm glad I got that over with! Once I realized I liked you I couldn't stop thinking about you." "I couldn't stop thinking about you either." Yuuto said gladly.

"I did have something else on my mind too though..." Yuuto said as he looked away. Afriyaz replied as she looked down, "What?" "Did you get rid of the ghost that haunted you in your house? I came to a conclusion that the ghosts that were haunting us are the people in those paintings you saw earlier." Yuuto said as he took a peek at Afriyaz. Afriyaz widened her eyes, "I didn't! Who could have been the ghost haunting me...?" Yuuto responded, "It could be someone who died from your family." Afriyaz stumbled backwards, "Could it be my dad?!"