## The haunted house

I walked the dog after dinner last night and when it was time to return home, I decided to take a shortcut through the woods. On the edge of the wood stood a deserted house. When I walked past the house I heard a strange noise. Suddenly, I fell a raindrop on my arm. "Great, the rain is starting", I thought. Fortunately, I had a hood on my jacket, but the problem was the mud and slippery grass. I had to walk slowly, which, in this situation, wasn't good at all. My dog started to bark at the house. In that moment I knew something was wrong because my dog never barks for no reason. I tried to calm him, but then the lights in the house turned on. I was confused for two reasons. First reason: when I was little, I was often playing in the woods with my siblings and that house was just a gathering place for hunters, but for the last ten years they haven't been visiting this place. Second reason: the house was covered with grass and even the door was covered with it. How could anyone enter the house without cutting the grass or pulling it off? I tried to stay calm and not pay attention to that house, but then the lights turned off. That made me so scared because I have a phobia of darkness and I've watched a lot of horrors where the place of action is just this kind of an abandoned house in the woods. I looked at my phone to see what the time was, but my cell phone shut down even though the battery was not empty. I heard some noises coming from the house. The noises were horrible; someone was crying and trying to call for help. I approached the window to see who needs help, but the house was empty. I strongly pulled the dog leash and started to run but I fell in the mud, hit my head on a stump and passed out. I woke up in that house on the couch with a headache and my dog was lying on the floor under the table. I didn't know how I got there, but I knew that I needed to get home. I tried to get out, but I saw the shadow underneath the door. The man came in and started kicking me and saying that he would kill me. "The last victim was like you. You will end up the same as she did", he said. A typical scenario from the crime series went through my head. I was hoping that the agents would come to the house and save me. I soon realized that no one would save me and that this was the last day of my life. I started to cry and the dog came to me. The man took my dog and left me alone for a while. When he returned, he approached me and whispered to my ear: "There is no reason for you to cry or to be scared. This is a dream. A nightmare, to be precise. You can simply wake up and all of this will be over."

I woke up and realized that all of this was a lucid dream and it was 4 a.m. so I went to sleep till the morning. At 7 a.m. the alarm clock went off, I got up and went to the bathroom. When I looked at myself in the mirror, I spotted a mark on my head and mud all over my arms. I immediately remembered the dream and tried to find my dog, but my brother told me that the dog escaped last night and that he couldn't find him anywhere. Suddenly, someone knocked on the door.

When I opened it, I realized it was the man from my dream holding the dog in his arms. He didn't say a word, he just gave me the dog and ran away.

Was my lucid dream a dream or reality? What caused the scar on my head? How did the man know whose dog it is and where we live?

The answers to these questions remained a mystery forever and I never saw that man again.

Martina Štefanac