

## A Strange Experience

*Those were the days when the sun began scorching. Our summer holidays had just begun. As far as I remember, I had then completed my 5th class in an eminent international school located in the outskirts of the city we lived. As both of my parents were job-holders, I was accustomed to gloomy routine and awfully tedious city-life, absence of fragrance of relationships around me made my childhood days even more depressing. But a period of incessant holidays kept me away from this feeling. I spent my vacations at my grandma's house surrounded by green blanket and beautiful landscapes, close to my loved ones. Those days were like heaven to me, free from the hectic schedule. There lived few other kids of my age and some other smaller than me. I played bucolic games with them in sweltering summer with salty sweat running from my head to knees. I would get lost in my world until my grandma yelled for me to have my lunch or homemade snacks.*

*To this day I clearly remember the strange incident that occurred to me during one of my vacations. One evening, as usual I was playing a game similar to the present day well-known game cricket with my peer group. It happened that the ball I hit had fallen into the verandah of an abandoned house. So as per the rules and regulations of the game, it was then my duty to bring the ball back. Some friends accompanied me to aid me in searching for the lost ball. Though the house was in the vicinity of our playground, I never paid my attention to it. Unlike some sort of filmy, abandoned horror-house, the house had a pleasant atmosphere. As we opened the gate of that house, we were surrounded by enchanting aroma of jasmine. The tall Ashoka (typical tree which is seen mostly in India) trees present there made the place look shady. Tranquility ruled over the place. For a moment strange feelings conjured up my mind. We begun our quest for the lost ball in the verandah of the house which is about 150 yards (that is what my memory says). As we went to the side lane of the house, we found an old man holding the ball in his hand. He handed over it to us with a pleasing smile on his lips without using a word. We then found that the sun had already set and realized that it was time for us to go home. We left the place in a hurry, trying to find our way in that twilight. Later, one of my pals who accompanied me told me that the house was deserted some years ago and no one guarded it. We wondered who the old man was. On further enquiries made by my friends we learnt that the family*

*which lived there before left it after the death of an elder of that family. Learning this truth, my body trembled with fear for a moment as the thought presently in your mind had sprung in my mind.*