

S'mores

Huan speared his marshmallow and held it over the flames. He watched his friend Jack turn his stick slowly, browning the white blob evenly on all sides. Huan preferred to catch his on fire. It was better that way.

While the campers assembled their treats, their counselor told stories. They were supposed to be scary, but mostly they were funny. There was one about a severed hand that chased people through the woods. Another was about the ghost of a camper who haunted the showers and made the water turn cold. The most absurd was about a giant killer cockroach that lived in the arts and crafts tent. Huan smirked. As if he would be scared of a bug.

Huan knelt down to get a chocolate bar out of the package. Campfire s'mores were a great tradition, even if you had to listen to stupid stories to get them. The counselor was droning on now about a mysterious chopping sound in the woods. He claimed it was an ax man, who cut down trees to block the paths of unsuspecting campers and then kidnapped them. Chop, chop, chop.

Huan almost laughed, but instead he focused on his s'more. He picked up a graham cracker and layered it with the chocolate and burnt marshmallow. He took a bite. Yum. He was just about to take another bite when he noticed that it had gotten quiet. Thank goodness *that* story was over.

But then Huan realized it was not just quiet. It was completely silent. Like, freakily silent. Huan looked up. Everyone had disappeared.

“Jack?” he called.

No answer. The fire continued to burn. The marshmallow roasting sticks had all been abandoned and the graham cracker box lay on its side.

“Jack?” Huan called again. He stuffed the s’more in his mouth and started to look around, calling his friend’s name every few steps. Nothing.

Then Huan heard something. Chop, chop, chop. A tree fell at his feet and blocked his path. He started to run. A few yards later another tree fell, making him veer to the right. Huan ran faster, his heart pounding. Chop, chop, chop.

Huan twisted and turned through the woods as trees fell all around him. At one point he heard a scrabbling sound. “Oh no,” he panted. When he looked back, he swore he glimpsed a dismembered hand skittering along behind him.

Finally Huan reached the bathhouse. Phew! He ran inside and leaned against the back of the door, breathing hard. He heard water dripping. One of the showers was on. Water ran out of the stall, across the floor, and pooled at his feet. It was ice cold.

Huan screamed and ran out of the bathhouse. He pounded blindly down the path until he got to the first structure on the right. It wasn’t until he



ducked inside that he realized what it was. The arts and crafts tent. And there, in the dim light, the cockroach was smirking, showing all of its fangs.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. How does Huan describe the counselor's stories at the start of the passage?
 - a. Scary
 - b. Funny
 - c. Serious
 - d. Sad

2. Which of the following was NOT the topic of a campfire story?
 - a. A giant cockroach in the arts and crafts tent
 - b. A severed hand in the woods
 - c. A ghost in the showers
 - d. A zombie in the boathouse

3. What's the first thing that starts to worry Huan?
 - a. He hears a scrabbling in the woods.
 - b. He burns his marshmallow.
 - c. Everyone disappears.
 - d. The water is icy cold.

4. Which of the following is probably NOT a reason that Huan is afraid of the cockroach at the end of the story?
 - a. Because it has fangs
 - b. Because its in the arts and crafts tent
 - c. Because he thinks all of the stories have turned out to be true
 - d. Because it was described as a giant killer cockroach

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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