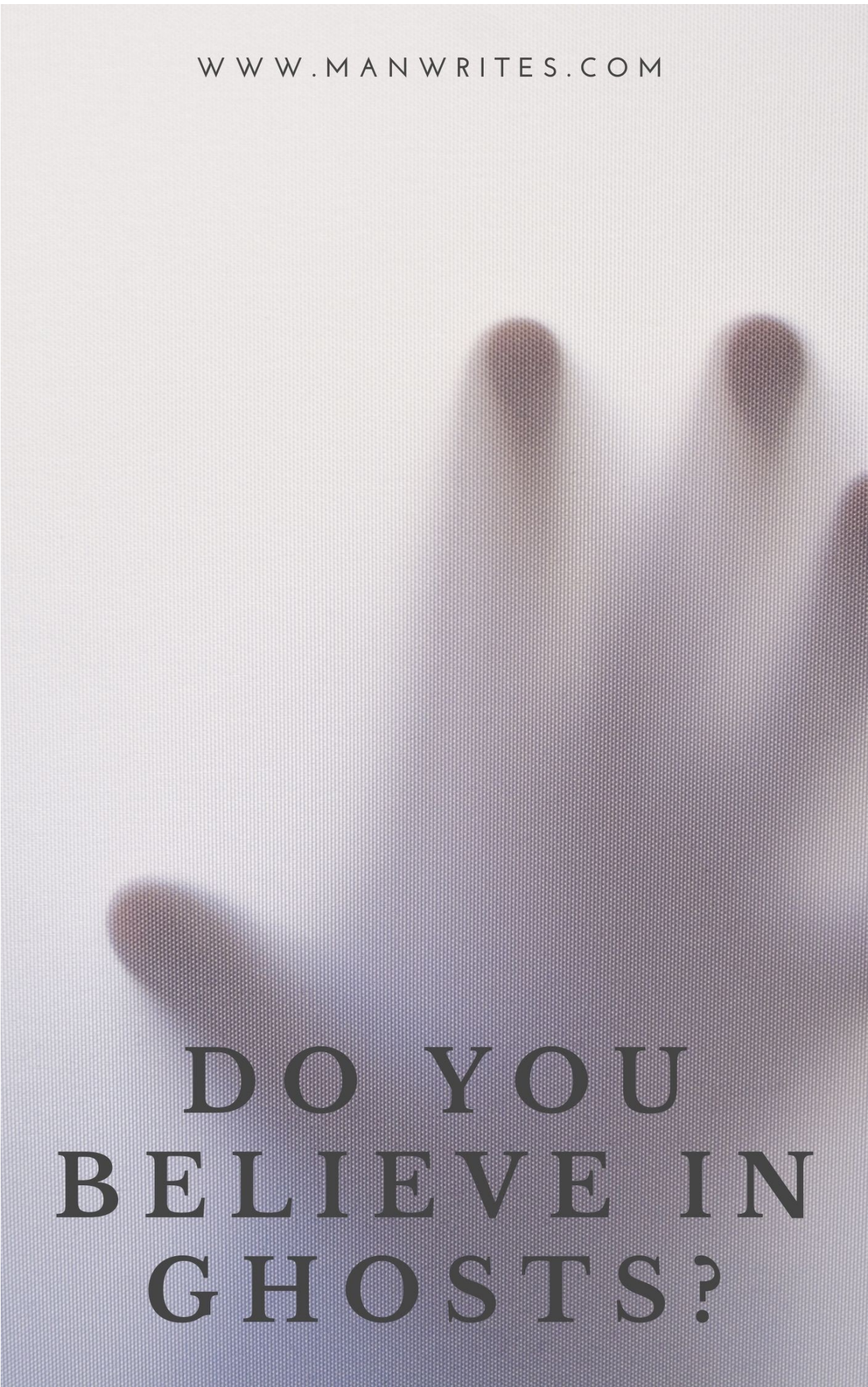


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DO YOU
BELIEVE IN
GHOSTS?

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Introduction

Do you believe in ghosts?

Are ghosts a strong part of your country's culture?

Are ghosts just an unexplained scientific phenomenon?

Reading

Most people in the world do not believe in ghosts. They may think ghosts are real when they are younger but as they get older they come to believe that there is no such thing as ghosts.

Mike Sparrow is one such man who does not believe in ghosts.

He is a 42-year-old sales manager, married with two children.

"My kids believe in ghosts," he said. "And I love to play tricks on them to scare them sometimes. But for me, I don't believe in ghosts."

He pauses and looks away into the distance.

"Well, I didn't believe in ghosts. Until last Friday afternoon at three-thirty."

What happened on Friday afternoon shook all of Mike's beliefs. Now he is not sure what he believes in anymore.

"I mean, I saw it with my own eyes," he said. "He looked right at me."

The story starts with Mike on a usual day of work.

"I was in the centre of London, meeting lots of clients and helping them with any questions they had. It was just a normal day really."

One client worked in an old bank in the city centre.

“I went to meet him around three o’clock,” said Mike. “He was just in the middle of something so I waited by the side of the seating area.

A security guard was by the door. He gave me a nod and said ‘You’re just in time for our ghost’.

I didn’t think I heard him correctly so I just laughed and said ‘Ghost? What do you mean?’”

Mike took another breath and shook his head.

“The security guard smiled at me and said that every Friday at three-thirty a ghost appears. I smiled back at him and thought maybe he was a bit crazy. What was he talking about? Ghosts? Come one. This is nonsense.”

Then Mike’s client appeared. Mike told him what the guard had said and his client nodded.

“It’s true,” he said. “He’ll be here any minute.”

Mike said that the bank looked perfectly normal. There were customers, bank clerks, people milling around.

Then the air shifted.

“It felt like the temperature dropped by about ten degrees,” said Mike.

Everyone else noticed it too.

Then from the back of the bank, a figure appeared. A man dressed in an old-fashioned Edwardian-style coat. He had a top hat and held a silver cane.

He walked through the centre of the bank and as he passed Mike he gave a small bow of his head, lifting his top hat. He mouthed something but Mike could not hear.

The man walked towards the doors of the bank and disappeared.

Mike ran after him and outside the bank. The street looked like a normal street in London. People walking around, a bus on the road, a man hawking newspapers.

“I swear to you, he was real,” said Mike. “He looked as real as you are right now.”

Mike shook his head.

“I don’t believe in ghosts. But now I am not so sure.”

Reading Comprehension Questions

According to the article when do people usually believe in ghosts?

Does Mike Sparrow believe in ghosts?

What about his children?

How do you think Mike plays tricks on his children?

Where was Mike on Friday afternoon? Why was he there?

What kind of building was Mike in?

Who spoke to Mike first?

Did Mike believe what this person said to him?

Were there many people in the bank?

What did Mike see at the back of the bank? How was this person dressed?

What did Mike see outside the bank?

By the end of the article, does Mike believe in ghosts or not?

Essential Vocabulary

no such thing	one such man
play tricks	shook (one's) beliefs
with my own eyes	clients
in the middle of something	security guard
nod	appears
nonsense	look perfectly normal
people milling around	shifted
temperature dropped	old-fashioned
Edwardian-style	top hat
silver cane	he mouthed something
hawking newspapers	I swear

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when*

studying.

“I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes in my English class.”

I Believe/I Don't Believe

Look at all the sentences.

Decide if the speaker believes in ghosts or does not believe in them. Or maybe undecided.

- A ghost working in a bank? Come off it!
- Ha! That's a likely story
- Ghosts? I don't know. What does science say about it?
- No, there's no such thing
- Until we can prove otherwise I am keeping an open mind
- They are as real as you or me
- It's up to other people to say they don't believe in them
- I believe in everything I see with my own eyes

Discussion Questions

Do you believe in ghosts? Why/why not?

Are there any ghost stories from your neighbourhood or town?
Tell the class the story.

If there is a story of a haunted house in your neighbourhood, how did this story begin?

If you had the chance, would you talk to a ghost? What would you talk about?

Do you know anyone who has seen a ghost? Do you believe them? Why do they think they saw a ghost?

If ghosts were found to be real, what scientific reason could there be for them?

Do people like to tell ghost stories? Why?

What is the difference between ghosts in your culture? For example, Chinese ghosts have no feet.

If you met something that looked like a ghost on the street late at night, what would you think about it? Could it be real? Or something else?

Can animals become ghosts? Or only people? Why/why not?

Writing

Write a ghost story that has a very scary ending. Give to your teacher for assessment.

Credits

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