



The Mystery of the Disappearing Lamps

Let's  Read

 The Asia Foundation



Hello! My name is Zed. Can you see me?

Of course you can. But a few days ago, it was very difficult to see anything.

Do you know what happened?

One mysterious night all the light bulbs in our village disappeared!



It was dark and people were frightened. We searched everywhere but we couldn't find any light bulbs.

The village people had a meeting to discuss the this mysterious event.

"Where are our light bulbs?" they asked. "Who stole them, and why?"



I was determined to solve this mystery. I knew every thief left evidence behind, so I put on my detective hat, grabbed a magnifying glass, and began my investigation.



With close examination, I found a long, black hair on my window sill.

"Aha!" I cried. "Whoever took the light bulbs must have left this hair! I wonder who it might be?"



I went in search of the thief, wondering what I might find. A monkey, a deer, or maybe an ogre? What if it was something terrifying?



I knew I must be brave and find the thief so we could have light in our village again. So I searched high and low through mountains, valleys, and forests, but never found another strand of hair like the one on the window sill.



I was about to turn for home when suddenly I saw a bright light shining from a cave in the distance.



Could it be someone who knew about our light bulbs?

I climbed quick as a monkey to reach the opening high up on the mountain.



Inside was an amazing sight . . . more lightbulbs than I had ever seen in one place were piled everywhere!

While some hung from wires above and shone brightly into the night, most of them were strewn around the floor. What was going on here, and who had done this?



A rumbling sound suddenly rose up from deep in the cave. "I took the light bulbs," the voice said.

I shook and my knees trembled, as I waited to see what would appear. A big, dark shape came to the entrance.



As it came into the light I realized that it was a bear! A bear with long, black hair.

I got up the courage to speak. "Aren't you an Andean Spectacled Bear? Your hair matches the one I found in our village. Why did you take our lights?"

The bear sat down with a flop. "Yes, I took the lights. I have no family left. Very few bears like me are still living in these mountains. I have been very lonely. I thought the bright

lights would get the attention of another bear who could come keep me company."



"Did it work?" I asked, feeling sorry for the bear now, and no longer frightened.

"No. You are the first one to see my lights. You are not a bear, but would you be my friend?"

"You could have asked first, before taking the bulbs!" I scolded the bear. "But I will come visit you again if you promise to return the bulbs to our village."



Surprisingly, the bear agreed! "I am happy to return your bulbs," he said. "You see, these bulbs consume a lot of electricity! The bill I received after turning on so many lights was very high. And if you come visit me again, I won't need them anymore."

"I've never thought about how much electricity lightbulbs use before. But that gives me an idea!" I said. "I think I know how to solve both of our problems."

With the bear's help, I loaded all the light bulbs into a cart, then I carried them back to the village, but not to plug back in!



I was going to use the old, inefficient bulbs for decoration! My friend Lina helped me. With some paint, string, and a few plants, we turned the old bulbs into all kinds of beautiful things. We agreed to sell them to raise money for new bulbs that used energy more efficiently.



Everyone loved the decorated bulbs, and soon we had made enough money to buy new light bulbs for everyone in the village. People were surprised to learn how much money they could save with the new bulbs!



I did not forget about my bear friend either. I began visiting his cave regularly, and introduced him to some new friends.



In turn, he came to our village and participated in a local stage play, lit beautifully by our new bulbs. The bear was delighted to have friends to visit, and we were happy to have lights in our village again.



So, now you know how wonderful it is that you can see me! But why is my mom calling me from the kitchen?

"Zed! Come here! Someone has taken the refrigerator!"

I wonder who the thief is this time?



The End

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