

## **The Night of Lights**

I am wrapped in the blanket of night. All is silent. Nothing moves. The ground is cold against my back, and I shiver slightly.

I open my eyes and it is pitch black. No lights are near me, and if I stay still, I start to see the glimmer of the stars in the sky above. There is no moon, no planets, just pricks of starlight in the total blackness.

I feel small, insignificant, lost in a realm that in turn loses me in the infinity. I am no-one, nobody, nothing. The stars slightly twinkle in the cold air, and they take on a shimmer. Can each small pinprick be an essence of a distant flame, leading our forefathers on a long-lost trail, or perhaps may be an imagined spirit?

For thousands of years my ancestors looked up at the heavens and tried to divine its meaning. Are these celestial lights a message that we should heed, a sign of famine or feast? Humans have assigned a hazy meaning to these constellations - without any comprehension. We still puzzle over the Universe to this day. Some have dreamed a purpose, or created myths oft told by ancient soothsayers to those who needed direction in life.

We have all been fooled! There is no connection between the stars and ourselves, just an enticement that encourages to reach out further. To investigate, to learn, to study our true being, our lives and perhaps our future.

**BOOM! BANG! SCREECH!**

Instantaneously, I am blinded, there is a massive flash of lights and an explosion of sound. Those around me gasp with amazement. The stars are lost in the sudden brilliance of the explosions.

**REDS! YELLOWS! GREENS!**

Colours overwhelm the senses. Arrows of amber! Bursts of white! Ever expanding spheres of blue! Flames are lofted well into the heavens above us all, as if held by an invisible hand onto the sky. I am surrounded by exclamations as all our emotions are carried high by the display. The colours grow less intense, and they drift slowly up and away, and then drift down towards the ground.

I now see the closest faces lit like shadowy ghosts in the ethereal light. There are smiles, looks of shock, amazement, and angst. Looking around I can see small children closely hug their parents, and the elderly seemingly still asleep. Couples are holding each other closely, partially in tenderness and partially against the cool air.

All is reflected in the still waters of the lake – the water doubling the firework's images and colours for the audience. Not a ripple disturbs the image. The lake is a miniscule model of the heavens, seemingly with interstellar explosions within its waters.

Slowly the bright shiny fireworks recede, and I am left partially blinded by the glare, as I start to gather our things ready for a return to everyday life. The celebration is over and slowly, fighting against gravity, I stand, ready to take our earthly transport back to home.

I am cooking a BBQ for the family. The event has brought together our young and old, parents and children. We sit around the table eating our late-night repast, drinking a few drinks, and talking about what we have experienced.

Many will not ask why we put so much energy into entertaining ourselves. The children still show a slight nervousness, wondering what future dangers they may experience. Aunts and Uncles will enjoy the closeness of a family before they return to their sedate lifestyles.

The youngest children have now fallen asleep on the sofa, and the adults withdraw to sit on the patio, chatting and contemplating nature's sojourn. Sitting in the late evening air we

discuss how bright the fireworks were, and how we missed that special starburst seen in a previous year.

I wonder how many will never ponder the meaning of the heavens. The stars, now partially obscured by the smoke, still draw our eyes heavenward. It is a belittling thought that perhaps on a far planet, circling a distant star, there lounges an unearthly being, looking up at the stars. Perhaps a star we can both see. I imagine that it too is wondering if, in all the vast expanse of Nature, there exists another being doing the same. Perhaps we share more than I know!