

## A Good Scent From A Strange Mountain Reading Guide

1. A central Buddhist teaching is that everything is illusion. Identify the illusions in the first story. What, in your opinion, is the greatest illusion?
2. How does Mr. Green personify the narrator's grandfather? What else does Mr. Green symbolize for the narrator?
3. What is the trip back in the third story? Who is making it and does he or she reach his or her destination? What other trips are being taken?
4. In "Fairy Tales", in what ways does the narrator express her hopes and desires? Are her dreams fulfilled in the end?
5. In "Ghost Story", the narrator ends the tale by saying, "...I looked out the window and saw Miss Linh's tongue slip from her mouth and lick her lips, as if she had just eaten me up. And indeed she had." What is the narrator saying about himself with this last sentence?
6. What are some of the unifying themes that run through this collection? Which character or short story do you feel best expresses those themes?
7. All of the short stories are written in the voice of the first person. What type of effect does this have on the stories? What do you think Robert Olen Butler was trying to accomplish?