

Shopping mall and mother essay

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Fire is a good servant but a bad master. I could never forget the raging fire that destroyed the shopping mall which I often used to go. The scorching sun glared fiercely at my mother and me as we made our way back home from the market. Much to our surprise, a large crowd of people had gathered in front of the shopping mall which was just a stone's throw from where I live. Everyone had their heads hung up, gasping in horror. Our curiosity piqued, mother and I averted our gaze, and saw that clouds of black smoke were billowing out from the third floor of the building. I stood dazed, in a state of shock and crossed my fingers, hoping that the fire would spread to the adjacent buildings.

As a civic-minded citizen, mother fished out her mobile phone from her bag and dialled the police and the Civil Defence. Her voice quivered as she talked to the police holding tightly onto me with her cold-clammy hands. After mother had hung up the phone, she instructed me to remain where I was and then ran like the wind towards the fire alarm and press the button. Shortly after, the shopping mall was filled with ringing of the fire alarm and the screaming of people as they scurried out of the building. Mother quickly pulled me aside to avoid the human stampede. As the crowd milled outside, the mall, to watch the drama unfold, a loud explosion shattered the stunned silence of onlookers.

Horror swept through everyone's upon seeing a man emerging from the blazing complex which was billowing with smoke and flames. His body was darkened with smoke, parts of his skin melted to reveal raw skin, his arms and legs badly blistered. He seemed to be in a daze and a state of shock. Everyone stood by helplessly, frightened and flustered by the gruesome

sight. Fortunately for him, two nurses who were among the crowd came to his aid. It was a scene of chaos as loud thumpings of feet could be heard as shop owners and their staff rushed here and there to save as much of their goods as possible. To add insult to injury, a gust of wind fuelled the fire and it grew bigger and bigger as tongues of flames ferociously licked everything in its path.

Children started crying and clung to their mothers for comfort as they were terrified. Then, the wailing of the sirens herald the arrival of the ambulance, the police and three fire engines at the scene. All the people including my mother and me were pushed back by the police so as not to impede the fire fighters from doing their work. There was a scurry of activities as fire-fighters connected their hoses to a nearby fire hydrant. Jets of water were directed into the blazing building. The firemen battled with the raging fire for more than half an hour. Much to our delight, the fire was finally put out by then.

The crowd gave a thunderous applause for the fire-fighters for a job well done. The crowd soon thinned out. Investigations were made by the police who found out that a shopper had accidentally started the fire when he threw a lighted cigarette butt onto a pile of discarded cardboard boxes. Mother and I heaved a sigh of relief as there were no further casualties other than the man who had suffered first-degree burns.

I was sad to learn from the press a few days later that the man had succumbed to his injuries. From the incident, I had to agree that fire is both a bosom friend and a deadly enemy for when fire is out of control, it is a

devastating force but when kept under control, it plays a major part in our lives from birth till we are cremated.