

The Fear In Your Head

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"No, no, no!" cried May Weatherbell, clinging, sobbing into her mother's dressed thighs, feet dragging, leaving scuff marks on already battered floorboards. No matter what, she couldn't sleep there again. She just couldn't. As she backed into her lonely little room, she thought she heard a noise. She swiveled round deliriously, giving her mother enough time to put her reflexes to use and close the door. And just long enough for May to spy the little grey possum perched on her window, chattering merrily; were not for the stretched plastic garbage bag caught between it's sharp little toes, and coming out in a loop around it's starved, skinny stomach.

May came at her bed in a running leap, landed face-first, rolled over, and pulled her faded, eggshell white sheets up to her nose, as far as they would go without trapping herself in a tiny pocket of thin sheets, forbidding the stale air to reach her lungs, suffocating herself in the process.

May stared, wide-eyed, around her cluttered bedroom. It was her first without her mother or father, and not a very attractive start. The floorboards creaked and groaned under the softest of footsteps, such as those the tiniest mouse would step. The angry branches in the garden outside thudded and scratched against her squeaky window, and cast shadows on one's face, shielding you from the ghostly moonlight outside. As she would just start to fall asleep, and feel her stomach, which was now on a regular basis as jumpy as kangaroos in a trampoline park, start to settle - **screech!** Bats would fly out of the old mineshaft, all too close and MUCH too accessible to her window. For, you see, although May was the oldest child in her family, she always felt like the smallest, the youngest. Well, in the dark, at least.

As May drifted into a restless sleep full of monsters and gnarled hands scratching down the window that night, she thought she dreamed an unaccustomed howl she hadn't heard since her sister was a tiny tot, and wondered what on earth it could be at this hour. You see, although she had not yet started school, she had taught herself the time from the shadows flung on the dry ceiling above where she lay. (That, and the fact she was so frightened these days she always lay awake until the wee hours of the morning). She would have gotten up to see the early riser were not for the treacherous and dragging tiredness that incredibly and suddenly overwhelmed her tense, frightened body.....

As the sun broke away from its hilltop prison, chasing the monsters of May's dreams, she opened her door to find a mess of new and old beds. A sister waiting with pillow under her arm, and a new baby brothers christening to get to.

She was grateful to learn her sister's snoring beat the screeching of a bat colony by far.