

The Monster Under the Bed

by

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FADE IN:

INT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

ELLIE, 8, in Wonder-woman PJs.

MOM 30s, bends down in front of Ellie, kisses his cheek.

DAD, 30s, checks the windows are locked, blows Ellie a kiss and walks out the door.

MOM
Okay, all set?

Ellie nods.

MOM
Now, no nightmares tonight, right?

ELLIE
Uh-huh.

MOM
So. Say it with me.

MOM (CONT'D)
There are no monsters.

ELLIE
There are no monsters.

Ellie hops into bed and Mom tucks her in. Ellie grabs her Mom's hand as she's about to walk away.

ELLIE
But Mom... What if there are?

MOM
If there are, you know exactly what to do. Never look the monster in the eye.

ELLIE
(nodding)
Never look the monster in the eye.

MOM
Good.

Mom switches the light off, the bedroom door closing behind her.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Ellie sleeps soundly.

Until...

A howling wind outside causes the bedroom windows to rattle against their hinges but they remain shut.

Ellie's eyes blink open in the darkness.

Something scrapes against the floor under her bed. It pulls at the bedcovers.

The windows rattle again, straining against the wind.

Ellie yanks the covers up tightly around her, teeth chattering.

She squeezes her eyes shut.

ELLIE
(whispering under her
breath)
Not real, not real, not real.

More movement under the bed.

ELLIE
Go away, go away, go away!

Quick as a flash a dark figure scuttles out from underneath the bed, lumbering footfalls flying across the room.

The door to the bedroom slams shut.

INT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - LOUNGEROOM - DAY

GRANDMA, 70s, places a plate of cookies and a glass of milk in front of Ellie as she does her homework.

GRANDMA
You look tired, kiddo'. Everything
okay?

ELLIE
It's not working.

Tears run down Ellie's cheeks.

GRANDMA
What's not working?

ELLIE
Momma says there are no monsters.

GRANDMA
But you know otherwise?

Ellie nods.

GRANDMA
I should never have told your Mom
the same thing. Truth is, monsters
do exist.

Ellie's eyes go wide. Her worst nightmare confirmed. Grandma
takes Ellie's hands in hers.

GRANDMA
Let me guess. Your Momma told you
if you don't look at the monster,
it'll go away, am I right?

ELLIE
Uh-huh.

GRANDMA
And did it?

ELLIE
Yes. But then it came right back.

GRANDMA
Okay. So, I'll let you in on a
little secret. In life we have to
face our fears and stare down the
monsters or they'll haunt us
forever.

Ellie's bites her lip, the prospect of staring down a monster
is terrifying, unfathomable.

GRANDMA
Don't worry, I'm going to let you
in on another little secret...

EXT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The wind is once again howling outside, battering at the
windows.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Everything in the room, every shape of every toy, the clothes
draped over a chair, the posters on the wall, the teddy-bear,
the dolls - all have taken on an ominous threat.

Something moves under Ellie's bed.

Ellie bolts upright, wide awake.

ELLIE
(whispering)
I'm not afraid of you. I'm not
afraid of you.

All movement under the bed stops.

Then suddenly whatever it is moves again, gnarled fingers creep up and around and pull at the bedclothes.

At the same time an almighty gust of wind rips the hinges from the windows.

Ellie whips around to see them fly open, and -

Something thumps onto the floor. A hideous shape in the moonlight reflected on the bedroom wall, the sound of rattling breaths.

A cold icy wind follows it. Ellie can see the condensation of its breath in the darkness, as it moves closer and closer.

She squeezes her eyes shut.

Her entire body wracked with fear.

The thing under the bed sees it too. It creeps along the floor on its belly, trying to keep quiet.

But the Monster spots it.

Lunges at it.

Lifts it effortlessly in the air. The thing that was under the bed screams. Primal, desperate.

Ellie opens her eyes long enough to see it and the monster looming over the top of it.

The Monster still with it in its grip.

Ellie SCREAMS.

ELLIE
Daddy!

The Monster lets it go.

Lightning fast the thing that was under the bed moves fast to the far side of the room clamoring for the exit. The door slams shut and it's gone.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ellie is sound asleep. The windows are shut and all is calm.

Moonlight casts light on something big under the bed. It moves, then moves again, a low exhalation of breath can be heard, as if finally it's comfortable and where it belongs.

ELLIE (V.O.)

There is a monster under my bed.
But it's there to protect me.

FADE OUT.