

The Monster That Stares

-Flash fiction -

Written by
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There I am an *elderly frightened man* — trying to rest at night. Like a *fool*. Knowing that at any point during this night — the *staring monster* will lurk his head yet again. I try to rest — but I become *frightened* at his sight. I have witnessed this *vile creature* for most of my life, locked up in this so-called “*tiny room*” that bared my soul since birth. This tiny room has had many people inside of it. *Girlfriends, lovers, friends, family, enemies*. But my soul, my soul is now kept guarded by one *true love*. She lives with me in this *tiny room*. She is *beautiful* — she is *magnificent*. She keeps me *calm*, she *cools my thoughts*, she lays there with me in bed every night and when I fear this monster that lurks — she sees him too! But she is stronger than I am — she doesn’t fear him at all. So, I hold on to her. I used to love to hear my darling *whistle* — but she sleeps at night now — and this monster understands this. This monster knows that even though she is there — she is not frightened of him — I am! And he makes me see *images* in my *mind*.

There he is again . . . *a devil . . . a gargoyle!* He lurks into my room. I cover my head as I lay in my bed. When this monster lurks into my room — I begin to witness *dark, frightening, vile imagery* all around my tiny space. My eyes open and I uncover my head but just enough to see the walls to the sides of me. My fingers hold on to my blanket tightly, so tightly my fingers can break. I begin to witness dark shadows of what appears to be fifteen different hands — sliding upon the walls of my room. The hands don’t stop until their palms reach the floor. Their arms are stretched and I never witnessed a body. All I ever see is many hands attached to many long arms. Some point at me. Some raise their *middle fingers*. Others throw up *gun signs* and

gang signs. Some are throwing up a *fist*. Others are pushing their fingers back into their palms, in an attempt to get me to *come to them*. But I won't. I would never! And I don't! I'm stronger than this — I'm smarter than that! I witness visions of cockroaches. They are about four feet long. *Huge, black, and slimy*. And they are crawling all over the screen of a television. I call it *a television* — even though it's in *my space* and it's supposed to be *mine* . . . it really isn't. At least I don't consider anything in my space mine because once my *heart stops* it will all just be spread around to other people or the *trash* anyway. In this world I live in — *nothing is mine* — *ever*. Everything is either someone else's stuff that was given to me — or something I made by my own hands. The existence of everything in my space — *just is*.

It's like me — I kinda' *just am*. Just kinda' *exist*. *Barely*. I have a *heartbeat*, but people think my heart is only beating to keep me alive to help . . . *them*. That my heart isn't beating to *help myself*. I realized that in this life, in my tiny space, no one truly ever gave a fuck about me. I can say this with the utmost surety. *Why?* Because as I said . . . *it just is*. Whether this room had *one hundred people living in it* — no one will ever make the effort to just *talk to me* — just to talk to me. No one was ever *curious* enough to know what I feel, think, why I feel and think, or why I don't feel or think. I was *ignored* more times than I can count. Flat out ignored. When people would text me — I would get right back to them. But when I text — they judge it on whether or not it *requires a reply*. And then maybe they will or they wouldn't. No one will ever connect the dots to my inner being the way I felt curious to try and learn about theirs. Most people in general became *frightened* and ran away from me. One way or the other. The only one who isn't frightened of me, besides my one true love, is this *staring monster* that lurks into my room at night. But everyone else?

No, all anyone would ever care about is how I can help them. A conditional relationship — while trying to stomp on my soul and kill my spirit at the same time. This *monster* understands this — he *witnessed* it as well. And he tries to use it against me. Allowing me to see damning images in my mind. I once wrote sixteen different books with my own hand, and whether it was a house full of one hundred people or none, the same amount of people still read my stories. Only I. Even when the books

were released to the *outside world*, still, the same amount of people on the outside read my stories. Only I. No one ever cared to wonder — curious to see. I even made music, so much music, and no one ever cared to listen to it. No one cared to ever listen to or read anything that came from *my soul* — but it's curious that they all wanted me to listen to *theirs*. When my tiny space had more people living in it — there was *yelling, noise, rudeness, fights, arguments, stress*, things that made writing the books and making the music or painting or building that much more difficult to achieve. But I did it! And still — no one from the inside, or outside, of my spot, ever cared. Achieving these things wasn't *easy* — yet — there are people who only consider what I've done real if I only ever made any money with it.

I consider it *real* — because I fucking did it. While still being dependable to everyone else's bullshit. And in *defiance* of this *monster* that lurks in the room. This monster *understands* this. And every night he lurks into the room and tries to twist and play onto these truths. To get me to *stop*, to *stomp my spirit*, to have me no longer *one with myself*. When I know that being one with myself is truly the only thing I've got. But yes — I do have my one true love — and she sleeps beside me so *calm* and *strong* on these nights. I sometimes look down at my own shoes and want to cry — why? Because I know even my shoes aren't worth anything to anyone. The image on the television is stuck. I was watching the news and now it's just two women sitting at a desk, with their mouths wide open. They are stuck that way — *frozen*. Wide open as the roaches crawl all over the glass on the television screen. My goodness — must this night be this way again. What have I done in my life to deserve such — *fear*. I peel off my gray blanket from my face, a blanket that my mother bought for me before she had passed. It wasn't something I asked for but she gave it to me for my birthday. I never liked it nor did I find it to be very attractive. But after she *passed*, I finally opened up the plastic that it came in, and I have had it on my bed ever since. *Thirty years* have passed since she's passed, and many things have been on that blanket now. *Naked bodies, liquid life, perfumes, my cologne*, stench of all types have all *blanketed* this blanket. Now here the blanket shields me — once more, from the *monster, the devil, the demon* staring at me.

This demon looks at everything I see — and only when I look at him he looks back at me. The fright I feel that enters my heart and my soul when his eyes look back at me — is a fear I wish should never be. It doesn't make my lips quiver, *you dumb bitch*, it makes my *heart* and my *bones shiver*. It makes me wish I was a little child again — a child in which at least I could be protected. Protected by my parents but both are *gone*. But I have no *brothers*, I have no *sisters*, I have no *children*, no *family* and I have no true *friends*. I am like a *ghost*, dropped on this earth — And now here I am, a *sixty year old man*. My teeth are rotting from within my gums. My liver hurts, badly, but I can't stop drowning it with wine. More *wine, wine, and wine*. Gallons by the gallons full. I used to be able to *piss normally* but now it's barely coming out. My *dick doesn't work any more* — well — *maybe it does* — but I definitely have to stock up on magnesium in order to have it work right. My hair is gray and falling out.

My skin is wrinkled all about. When I open my eyes in the morning they are bloodshot red. Red from the stress of fearing this staring monster by my bed. This treacherous gargoyle reminds me about how my hands are brittle. How I can barely even move my neck to the left and to the right. I can feel him staring at me once again — even as I cover my face with this blanket. He's making me want to look at myself and say that I am *worthless* — yet again. But I won't, I shall not, I can't. He's making me want to call myself *ugly* again — but I still try very hard to give some ray of hope to myself that maybe my looks haven't faded that much. This filthy devil knows all my secrets — this monster never preys on my *strengths* — but only my *weaknesses*. I used to be athletic, but now my back and my hips can barely move. Oh, how they are stuck in a greater happier time. I clench my blanket tightly with my fingers. I pray and I wish for him to go away. But this demon makes me think *intrusive* thoughts yet again. He gets me to even taste the ugly taste that comes from my own mouth. He gets me to look at my own skin and how I feel it to be dirty and horrible. He gets me to look at my weight, or lack thereof, and gets me to feel *ashamed* of my own *body*. Even makes me feel ashamed that I'm even eating food to begin with.

“*Why not just leave it for people that truly need it, old man . . . ?*” He sometimes utters in my ears.

“Why are you above the grass, maybe get under it and leave this open space for someone who is worth more than you — so they can use it . . . old man . . . ?” The treacherous gargoyle spews. He utters things that make me ashamed of my hair, or lack thereof. It makes me think of my one true love right besides me. And even makes me scared to hear her *whistling*. Even though I love the sound of it. It’s a beautiful sound — I love it! But this devil in my room makes me think that if I heard her whistle — it would be the last time I heard the sound of anything. He knows to play on my fears — *all of them*. But every night I uncover my face completely and stare back at him. Stare right into his *cold, dead, blackened evil eyes* . . . and I say to him *“I refuse you, demon! Away!”* *“I refuse you, demon!”* I say this over and over and over.

Oh, if only you can feel the echoing thoughts of *criticism, shame, and disgust* that this demon is putting into my head. His goal is to make me want to be dead. But I refuse him! I refuse him just like I do *every night*. He will not impregnate my mind with these wiggling and intrusive worms. He’s trying to make me believe that all that is wrong with the world is my fault. The way of the world, and mankind, and the loss of their way — this devil that stares at me wants my brain to decay.

But I refuse, I refuse! Then, I open my eyes, slowly, and he is not there. I did it! I wished him away. It’s been like this for all my life nearly every day. I am growing *tired*, I am growing *weary* of *fighting* off this *beast*. But I know it’s a *must* — *every single day*. I look upon my side — the love of my life. I picked her up – my beloved *“Colt m1911 pistol.”* And yet — at least for another day – that monster that stares – did not make her *whistle*.

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