

UNDERNEATH THERE IS...

NIGHTMARE!

Andrew O'Donovan

"I can't breathe, I don't know why but I can't breathe."

He looked above him, the ceiling was sinking. He didn't know what to do. He just sat there and let it happen to him, there was a force shoving him, pushing him, choking him he slowly stopped moving until - BANG!!!!

He jumped up.

"Come on, It's time to go"

His 9:00 alarm was sounding.

"Time for school," his brother said.

He sprung up, got changed and went straight to school.

"Mr. Ryan O'Donnell please can you attend class, you're late," the principal shouted across the hallway.

Ryan ran to class in a hurry. When he entered, the whole class just gazed at him, he looked back in confusion and sat down.

“Alright class, please hand me your homework”.

Ryan places his homework on the desk and continues with his day.

Ryan stepped out of school and strolled to the bus stop.

“And where do you think you’re going tiny????”

He turns around and stares at the commenter.

“What now?” Ryan asked. This unknown person pulls out his hand and asks for his bag. Ryan hands it over. The person takes out his money and his bus card.

“Alright you can go now shorty”.

Ryan turns slowly back and walked home, he was in distraught. He continued home and read his comic book ‘The Shadows within’. It is about monsters who haunt people and their nightmares come to life. Ryan was into monsters, but his mom would never let him read those comics because he would have nightmares. But Ryan would always continue reading and reading.

“Hey Mom I’m home,” Ryan shouted. He walked into the kitchen and sat down with his family.

“So son how was school today?” his father asked.

No reply. Ryan just stared into his food stirring it around and around and around, over and over again, “And why were you so late”

Still no reply

“Come on speak up, why were you so late for 1 school and 2 dinner.”

He just sat there, not a sound and continued his dinner. Once he had finished he ran upstairs and continued with his comics. He grabbed his water bottle and read on. His head would slowly fall onto the pillow and he would shut his eyes.

A voice called his name repeatedly.

“Ryan, Ryan, Ryan.”

He followed the voice into a cave that seemed endless, but he came to a stop, the voice that was calling him, came from his comic book ‘The Shadows Within’ He opened it and a sentence was formed on an empty page

‘When an innocent mind is taken into my grasp, there I am, when this happens, the deepest fears are awakened, what am I?’

He sat in confusion and turned around, and saw something, he looked up and a huge shadow was standing over him, it seemed to

be a bear. It moved its head forward, close to his face, Ryan looked into its face and saw a skull looking at him. Ryan froze, the bear lifted its paw and loaded back to strike and.....KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

“Hey son can I talk to you”

Ryan sat up alerted and confused, looking around for that creature to come out.

“I shouldn’t have shouted at you at the dinner table, but you have to tell me if there’s anything wrong, Ok?”

“Ye, yeh sure thing dad, thanks.”

His dad looks at him and smiles, then leaves. Ryan can hear his name being called again, he jumps out of bed and grabs the first thing he could find, a hair brush the voice asks him

“Why are you scared Ryan” The voice deep and fearful, keeps getting nearer and nearer “Don’t fear boy. I’m not here to hurt you.”

“No leave me alone.”

“Why do you fear me?”

“Go away.”

“There is one thing you should know, boy, monsters are coming back to take what was rightfully ours.”

“And you are telling me because?”

“Because I’m the devils messenger and you are going to spread the word, if your people don’t listen to you, boy, the human race will come to an end.”

“Why me though? There is nothing special about me,” Ryan questioned the beast’s decision.

It replies, “You are the only human that knows that underneath there is nightmares, which makes your soul compatible with both worlds.” The beast submerged into the darkness and Ryan sat in fear, confusion and disbelief.

He woke up, beads of sweat dripping down, Ryan gazed at the ceiling and thought if the nightmares were coming into reality. But he knew that he had to go to sleep to get up early. He said to himself, “Tomorrow’s another day.”

Ryan went into school the next day, he was looking around in fear, He feels someone tapping him on the shoulder he spins around rapidly, and goes into a defensive position,

“Hey its ok I’m not gonna hurt you.”

Ryan looked up to a face he has never seen before, she had blue eyes, blonde hair, tallish, a kind looking face with hints of freckles.

“Oh hey, sorry about that I thought you were one of them bullies”

“It’s ok, my name is Aoife what’s yours?”

Ryan looked up like he was looking at an angel, he stumbled his words. “Oh eh my....my name is eh Ryan.”

She pointed at the seat beside him. “May I?”

“Yeah of course.”

She took out her lunch and looked at Ryan with a question on her face.

“Do you work at the petrol station just around the corner?”

“I do yeah, why’d you ask?”

“I just recognised you from school and all and I'd thought you had a friendly face, that’s all”.

Ryan just sat there and smiled.

“What you smiling about?”

Ryan looked up “Oh nothing.”

She looked away and smiled. Ryan reversed the question.

Aoife replied, “Oh nothing.”

The bell sounded.

“Well I hope I see you around.”

“Yeah, you too.”

Ryan waved goodbye and opened his bag to check if everything was still there, he opens his lunch box to find a sticky note “Call me sometime, 087 546 1223”

Ryan looked up and looked around to see if he could see her but she was nowhere in sight. He put the sticky note in his pocket and spun around in happiness and ran to the bus stop.

When he returned home he ran up to his room and grabbed his phone, He was staring at the sticky note and was nervously tapping the table - TAP-TAP-TAP-TAP-TAP! And he picked up his phone and dialed in the number – MMM! MMM!

It rang multiple times until she picked up. “Hello?” she asked confusingly.

“Uh hey its Ryan.”

“Oh, Ryan, how’s it going?”

“I’m good thanks.” Ryan looked outside at the weather and look at his table. “Do...ehh....Do you wanna come over?”

Kate replies, “Ye, sure. Now?”

Ryan snapped back with, “Yeah, now, if your able to.”

“Yeh. I should be.”

“OK see you then.”

“Ryan, I don’t know where you live?”

“Oh yeah, its 224 Abbey street, it’s near the gas station.”

“Oh ok, I’ll see you in about 15 mins.”

“Alright see you then.”

Ryan hung up and jumped up in excitement. He went to go tell his Mom that he was bringing Aoife over and the beast’s eyes were poking through the closet door.

“So a new friend?”

“Uh, yeah, why do you care?” Ryan looked it dead in the eyes.

“Just asking.”

“Listen here.....What’s your name?”

“Nightmare.”

“Well then, Nightmare, you better stay away from Aoife when she’s here, you hear?”

“Hmm, I might have a little taste.”

“Ew! You are disgusting.”

“Isn’t that what you want, a taste.”

The doorbell chimes in the halls and Ryan runs down the stairs to answer it.

“Hey Ryan,” Says Aoife.

“Hey come in.”

Ryan shuts the door and follows Aoife up to his room.

“Your room is pretty cool,” as she spins around the room.

“Do you wanna see something cooler?” Ryan opens the window and walks out onto the roof which was lit by candles and had blankets with some chocolate and popcorn.

“Oh my God, Ryan this is so cool.”

Ryan looked down to his feet and smiled.

They both lay down and looked up at the stars and Aoife turned and said, “Ryan, this absolutely beautiful”

“I know right, anytime I’ve had a bad day I come out here and star gaze.”

Ryan turned and looked at her, she looked back they made eye contact, Ryan closed eyes and leaned forward...

“Ryan, can you come in for a second?”

Ryan jumped up and ran inside to see Nightmare looking at him.

“Nightmare what the hell, how can you do such a good impression of my mother.

“I’m from the underworld what do you expect, but you are being summoned.”

“By who?”.

Nightmare looked down and said, "He is waiting."

Ryan looked up in fear, he walked to the window and said, "Aoife my mom says you have to go home now."

She sat up "Already?"

"Yeah she says it's late but I say otherwise."

Aoife sat up and said to Ryan, "I'll see you in school, loser!"

Kisses on his cheek

Ryan spins around in joy and jumps up and down, "I can still hear you."

Ryan corrects himself and hears himself being called, "Ryan...Ryan...Ryan."

He grabs his comic and closes his eyes.

The air was filled with dust and fog, nature with no life, streams of some sort running through the ground. A full moon blaring its song in the sky and howling of a wolf sounding. Ryan looked around him in mystery.

"It's about time you showed yourself. I've been waiting for you for – Wow! Ten thousand years! - so Ryan I believe you have what I need."

"And that is?"

The demon pointed at him.

“I don’t understand”

“Your soul is the only one compatible with your world and mine, and I want in.”

Ryan looked up in fear. At first he turned and looked for a way to run, he looked down at his comic.

“You can have it.”

“Where is the fight in you, Ryan?”

“My family don’t love, I’m doing horrible in school, no one in school likes me and I’ll never get a chance again so go ahead take me I’ve got nothing to lose.”

Ryan looked up with tears in his eyes. The demon turned and laughed at him.

“Pity human, but I admire your pity. You would fit in well with the slaves.”

Ryan levitated off the ground, He could feel his chest being pulled apart and says, “I can’t breathe. I don’t know why but I can’t breathe.”

Ryan remembered this from a past nightmare, his eyes slowly closing and the demon said, "Underneath there is.....**NIGHTMARE!**"