

**THE NIGHTMARES OF**  
**FINNEGAN**  
**QUICK**



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*For Fungle Joe, my best bro*



# FRIDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER

Whoever finds this, be warned. This is going to creep you out. And it's going to get creepy, fast. So if you're someone who talks tough but still needs a light on when you go to bed – just stop reading. Do yourself a favour and read something else. I'm not judging you. I go to sleep with *all* the lights on. You will too when you know what I know.

Because what I'm going to tell you will change *everything*. Once you know what's out there, and what they want, the world won't ever be the same again.

You know the stuff we're all afraid of? The things they make horror movies and write books about? Vampires and werewolves and zombies and devils and demons and creepy little kids on tricycles who suck out your

soul? Well, we're scared of them for a reason.

We fear them because we've *seen* them. Because they exist. And they come for us every time we sleep. They come for all of us. And the only reason they haven't got you yet – well, it's because of people like me. People who go to sleep every night with their arm in a bucket of warm water.

But I'll get to all that later, because I've got the whole night to write this. It's not like I'm going to sleep, not tonight of all nights. So I might as well start at the beginning and tell you everything. And if by some freak disaster I do fall asleep, at least someone will know the truth. Because frankly, at this precise moment in time, I'm the only one left who knows what's happened.

They've already got my shadow – the one they replaced it with is pretty gross. And once they get the rest of me, this notebook will be all there is. The only evidence that I or my family ever even existed.

You see, that's how it works. The monsters, in my dreams, are always hunting. Hunting me. They come in all shapes and sizes. Some are animals, some human. And some, you couldn't make up – zombies with melted faces and vampires starting to rot. But there's one monster, a woman, who is always there when something really, truly terrible happens. She lurks on the edges of



dreams waiting to snatch things. And by things – I mean my family.

My dog was first, eight years ago, when I, Finnegan Quick, was just a little scat. It's my first ever memory, so we may as well start there.





# MY FIRST MEMORY

I was young, not even at school, and we had a dog, a white terrier called Biscuit. But then I started having dreams about him.

There'd be a knock on the front door, a big, heavy knock, like a knock of doom. I'd be sitting on the kitchen floor doing a jigsaw or whatever four-year-olds do and I'd hear that big old, heavy knock on the front door. Like it was done with a massive fist. Biscuit would go nuts – running about, barking, growling, but no one else would even notice. Mum and Dad just carried on, like they hadn't heard a thing. That's when I'd know it was a dream and not real, because no one could have ignored that knock, not in real life. I'd wake up then, screaming my little toddler lungs out.

And that's how it went on – for weeks, maybe even months. But then the dream started changing. *Growing*. The first bit was just like before, except now the door would open. I'd look through from the kitchen into the hallway and I'd see a shadow on the wooden floor. And then a hand would reach into the hallway, to pet Biscuit.

It was a woman's hand but deathly white, empty of blood. And all the creepier because the nails were bright crimson. They were long and pointed, and as the hand reached down to pat Biscuit, blood would drip on to his trembling head.

'There's a good doggie,' she would say. But in a rasping, grating voice that seemed somehow less than human.

I always shut my eyes then. Boy, did I shut my eyes, because I knew that, whoever she was, if I opened my eyes – if that woman looked into my eyes – *she'd get me*.

And every night the dream story grew.

With my eyes shut, I never saw what happened next. But I heard it. And I *smelt* it. Whatever the creature was, it came into our house smelling of death. Like raw meat left in a bin.

And the sounds: I'd hear our little Biscuit, growling, then biting and barking and fighting with the fury of pure, utter terror.

Until one night when I dreamed my dream, the barking stopped. I opened my eyes to see Biscuit lying on the floor, eyes open, breathing stopped, as that hand dragged him out the front door.

But that's not the freaky thing. That's not *the secret*. The secret that's been haunting me all these years is that my dreams don't just stay in my head. They change the world. They leave wounds and scars.

Because the next morning, when we went down for breakfast, Biscuit was gone. And not just him. His bed was gone too, and the dog bowl, chews, everything. Mum and Dad didn't say a word. No one said a word. It was like he'd never, ever even existed.

Told you this was going to get creepy. But it's nothing compared to what happened next.