Scots Horror Stories

BEWAUR O THE TAP…TAP…TAP

by Cara Mortimer (St Margaret's High School)

Ah've hid a feelin fur th last couple o weeks, a feelin that sumwan ur sumhins watchin me. At first ah ignored it but it's no goin awa an noo at's geein me the boak, tae be completely honest wae ye.

It all stertit wan Sunday nicht aroon aboot th time a seen a wee speeder buildin a wab in th coarner ae ma room. It didne really bother me as lang as it stayed oot ae ma road. Ah hid jist goat oot th shower an ah decidit tae pit nail polish oan. Ah didnae ken why ah decided tae dae ma nails raither than just sleep, but it didnae maitter. It ended up it wis takin ages, over an oor an ah wis barely feenished wan haun, no tae mention that noo ah wis cravin a wee scran. Ma maw an da were in their kip an ah wis supposed tae be asleep by noo, tae, cause it wis half-past eleeven at nicht. Ah made ma way oot ma room.

It wis awfae daurk oot in th loaby an quiet, tae. Ah creepit in tae th scullery, timerous as a wee moose, an ah raked in the cupboard lookin fur a bit o a scran, sumhin ah really wantit tae eat. Ah kent ma maw wid go radgey if ah woke her, fur she hid her work emorra. Ah helpt masel tae a can o ginger, (Irn Bru Extra cause ye ken whit they say, it's PHENOMENAL!) an a wee bag o jeely bear sweeties. An then ah made ma way oot in tae th daurk upsterrs loaby agin. As a got tae ma bedroom door, ah came tae a halt and aw th herrs on my heid stood up and ma lugs stairtit twitchin. Oot o th quiet an th daurk ah heard…

Tap…Tap… Tap...

"Wit wis that?" ah thought. "Probably just rain, it's always rainin oot here." Ah brought ma free haun up tae the haunle o ma door an grabbed it ticht ready tae open it when…

Scud.

Skitter.

Scud.

That wisnae rain. That wis footsteps scuddin the flerr. Nae doot sumwan wis in there, sumwan or sumhin? Ah wis feart noo, by th way. Ah opent th door slowly,

turnin,

turnin,

turnin th haunle.

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An a goat ready tae chuck ma can o ginger an skelp embdy wha wis er…

…But er wis naebdy er!

Ah goat roon tae enterin an lookt aroon ma room. At's when ma eyes wur met wae thon wee toatie baby speeder ae some sorts, aw black an herry. Its wee taes tappin acroass the flerr. "Ah warned ye!" ah telt it. Really, ah thocht it wis merr a wee sin fur me, than fur it that it wis in ma road in ma room, so ah wheecht it up, an flushed it doon th cludgie wae nae mercy at aw! No wan bit, ah tell ye! Ah pullt th plug an didnae even gie it anither thocht.

Efter scrannin ma jeely sweeties and tannin ma bru, ah wis feenishin ma nails aff. Ah lay doon in ma bed, it now being three in th mornin. A keeked at the cloack an worked oot it gied me three oors tae get a bit o kip, but ah couldnae help but wunner why ah heard muckle footsteps only tae be met by a daft wee speeder on the flerr. Ah fell asleep hinkin aboot aw ae this but it wis that nicht hings aw stairtit tae go wrang…

Ah hid continuous nichtmerrs aw ae them different except for a creature, sum kin o bogle or sperrit, ah'm sure. Ah didnae ever see its coupin mind ye, but it wis aboot six, tae seven feet lang an hid loads o airms aw aboot th same length as me. It wis aye follaein me in ma nichtmerrs an ah ayeways woke up froze wae fricht, efter it whispered tae me in a bluid-curdlin hiss,

"Yer time's nearly up lassie, fur ye must be struck fae this earth. Ye cannae escape yer fate nor slow it doon. Ye made yer choice, yer jist a helpless wee lassie, caught in ma wab, so ye ur."

Ah didnae tell anyone, no that many fowk would even listen tae me onyways, but even my ma an da didnae know aboot ma nichtmerrs. Ah didnae want them tae know. An this cairried oan fur a full week.

But wan nicht it wis different. Ah woke up from ma kip tae realise ah didnae hiv a bad dream. Ah felt relieved, as ah wis gettin fair scunnert wi ayeways haein nichtmerrs. When ah stood up, it wis still daurk, so ah checkt oot th time. It wis seven. Seven?! Ah wis late! Ah threw oan ma claes and bolted doon ma sterrs an that's when ah kent aw hings wurnae as they should be. In oor livin room evryhin was aw ower th place, oor gaff wis a midden and there wis cobwabs evrywhaur.

But afore ah could move, ah heard it.

Skitterin…

Wit wis that?

Skitterin…

It soundit close. Whur is it? Ahint me? In front of me?

Skitterin….

Maybe a dug? Aye, the neebors. They hiv dugs. Richt? Ah'm braw, evryhin's braw. Still ah cannae move. Ah'm too feart!

Scud. Tap. Scud. Tap…

That's nae dug. It's too close noo. Ah cannae breathe. Ma hert's racin.

Ah seen it! Tap…Tap…Tap…

A muckle great speeder. Six or Seven feet lang, black as mirk and aw herry. Thon lang airms fae ma dreams, thon gless eyes! Am ah still dreamin? Ah'll wake up, noo. Richt…? Haud oan a minute, that's no airms, it's legs, aw eight ae them… Tap…Tap…Tap…

Thon glisterin white een stairt richt through me, intae ma soul an a kent a wis fur it. Ah couldnae look awa. Slowly, wan leg at a time, th hing fae ma nichtmerrs walked tae me…scud…tap…scud …tap…

Ah couldnae move.

Twa claws reached oot tae grab us by th throat. Ah wis ready to wake up noo! But it wouldnae end. An that's when a kent that voice…

"Hello wee yin. Ah ken ye fae yer dreams but ye dinnae ken me. Ah'm an auld, auld speerit fae lang, lang ago. In Scotlan they cry me Auld Ettie. Aye, Auld Ettie Cap. Mibbe ye'd ken me better if ah telt ye ah'm th Maw tae aw th wee speeders yer kin squash, an stoat and flush doon th cludgie. At's your time noo, dinnae try tae ficht it, dinnae try tae escape it. Ye cannae get oot. Ye won't wake up agin."

An Auld Ettie Cap smiled an showed her peggy grin, black smoke startit tae pour oot fae her fangs. Ah kicked oot an ah strugglt tae get oot ae her grip aroon me. It wis nae use. Ah looked around tryin to find an escape, ah saw millions o speeders coverin th bluidy waws an smelt a helluva reek comin fae th auld broken fireplace. Ah started skirlin an greetin "Help me sumwan!" but naebdy wis listenin. Ah gave in ma strugglin an en a blacked oot intae th pitmirk.

Ah don't know where ah am now. Ah canny see a thing. Aw ah can hear is ma skirls and greets. An ah can feel the creepin an the crawlin aye ower ma skin. Am in pain but ah cannae stoap anyhin. Ah want tae greet but ah cannae. Ah want tae skirl but ah cannae. Ah miss ma maw an ma da. Wit happent tae me? Am ah deid? Am ah alive? Naebdy will ever ken. A hope that this is aw a dream. Am ah gonnae wake up fae this hell? If ah dae ah'm gonnae tell evrywan wit happened. Ah'm gonnae get them aw telt.

"Watch oot. If ye hear th tap…tap…tap… Bewaur o Auld Ettie Cap!"