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Andosia Heroes

Blood Bounds

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Falling into the void

I remember hearing people say they dreamt they were falling, falling into the void and that they woke in bed with the heart beating really fast. I remember hearing these tales and not paying much attention, dismissing it as rather a foolish dream and thinking there were more interesting things to wake us up in the middle of the night.

How could I have ever imagined the meaning of such dreams back then? I was far from guessing that this would happen to me one day and how everything would change after these dreams.

But I should start from the beginning. My name is Sofia, I am a single child, I am 15 years old and nothing remarkable or outstanding has happened so far in my life as far as I can remember. On the night of April 22nd, the eve of the day when I would blow the 15 candles of my birthday cake, I woke up in the early morning with the sensation of falling into the void. I didn't pay much attention, thinking that it was perhaps the result of the unrest that usually precedes the preparation of the party, when one is not yet certain of having everything ready before the guests arrive.

But the day after I had the same dream. And two days after the same happened ... For a whole week, the dream repeated, always the same. I was falling into a black environment, a long fall which gave me time to think about everything that could go wrong when the descent would end and I would move suddenly from the dizzying speed to the standstill position. When the fall ended, I woke up on my bed, soaked in sweat, the heart beating fast.

I had always slept like a log and didn't remember ever having had a nightmare. What was going on? And, above all, how could I go back to normal?

And to make matters worse, my mother was getting on my case, always complaining because I didn't make the bed because I had left the dirty socks scattered on the floor because I didn't come running every time she called for dinner ...

After all, the room was mine and I could leave it untidy. What could be the problem if my food was cold? Why didn't they start eating without me? But the relationship with my mother had gone sour, my father had joined the conversation and I ended up grounded and was not allowed to use the computer for a month.

My life had become a living hell! And to make matters worse on April 30th I lost my monthly travel card and spent almost two hours trying to get a new one. While I was waiting for the bus, it started raining, my umbrella did not resist the wind and I was for half an hour in the rain until I was able to take public transportation. I went home, I had an argument with my mother and went to bed without having dinner. But the day was not over yet ...

That night, the night of the last day of April I had the usual nightmare. This time I felt, more real than ever, the blast of air that occurred during the fall, the pitch darkness that surrounded me ... the impact when I fell.

I had not yet been able to find out where I was exactly when the light in my room went on, blinding me. My parents stood at the door: my mother looking scared, my father looking angry.

I was surprised at the position of my body, I tried to stand up straight and only then did I realise there was something wrong. The bed was broken, the bed base had collapsed in the middle and the mattress formed a “V” shape, in the centre of which I was sitting.

The interrogation began even before I could get up. Father and mother woke up with the noise and wanted to know what I had been doing in the middle of the night for such a thing to have happened.

I tried to explain that I didn't have the faintest idea, but they did not believe me and considered me guilty without even listening to what I had to say.

– Do you want me to believe that wood this thick broke while you were peacefully sleeping?

My father was not the beating up guy but the three times he did are still very much in my memory. And I have to confess –when I saw him with that furious look in his eyes– I feared that that episode may not end well.

But I managed to escape from it. That, which I considered being the first day of my life, ended only with a suspension of my weekly pocket money for an indefinite period until we were able to pay for a new bed.

When I was alone again in the darkness, I cried for the injustice I had been a victim of.

Then the tears disappeared and I was invaded by doubt: what was wrong with me? My father was right, wood would never break like that! It seemed as someone had jumped from a high place into my bed.

I sat down on the couch and I fell asleep thinking whether it would be possible for dream and reality to be somehow connected.

The first week of May was not easy, it was a week of school exams and I couldn't get my head into studying. The mystery of the broken bed was affecting me and I kept waking up in the middle of the night with the sensation of falling, the heart beating fast and my body hurting I was naturally devastated and everything was going wrong.

When I opened up with Francisca, my best friend, she suggested that I was perhaps a sleepwalker and that's the theory we decided to put to the test.

Upon her suggestion, that night I grabbed a ball of wool my grandmother had left behind in the house during her last holidays, I took a piece of two meters and, before going to bed I tied my ankle to the bedpost. If I would get up during the night, the wool yarn would break.

The clock stroke 03:30 when I woke up with the usual nightmare. My first thought was to look at the wool yarn: would it still be intact? I folded the leg and grabbed the yarn I had tied, pulling it slowly. Moments after I had the other end of the yarn in my hand.

I turned the light on and looked at my ankle. Below the wool yarn was a purplish mark on my skin, marking the area where the wool yarn had been pressed against the leg. The test worked, there it was the proof that I had gotten up during the night.

What had happened exactly? Where had I gone to? It was urgent to find out.

I could not fall asleep for the rest of the night. I felt like calling Francisca, but I did not have the courage to wake her up early morning. Therefore I stood there watching time go by and dragging until the alarm clock told me that it was time to get up.

Before my first class, I saw my best friend and I ran to her, eager to open up. But Francisca was with someone, and so she remained for a while, thus ruining my attempts to have a conversation with her. Classes went stupidly slow ... Utter despair! When the last class was over I grabbed my friend and dragged her to the quietest place in the schoolyard.

– Come on. I really have to talk to you. I need your help!

She listened carefully and once again she had the idea that would allow us to move further again in order to try to discover the truth.

I stayed in the room that night, reading. When I noticed that my parents were already in bed, I got up. Countering the punishment that had been imposed on me, I went to my laptop, opened WhatsApp, connected with Francisca and pointed the computer camera so that my bed would be framed in the image. I went to bed again, I closed my eyes and fell asleep, knowing that my friend would watch my sleep on the other side.

I had barely returned from my nightmare when the phone rang. The phone ring was getting louder and as I got up in a hurry to pick it up I stumbled on the backpack where I had kept it and I leaned on the bedside table, causing the lamp to fall and making much noise.

The mobile phone stopped ringing in time for me to hear my parents' door screech ... They were on their way to see what had happened.

I only had time to lower the portable screen and to turn the bedroom light on before the door opened and my mother walked in, followed by my father. I stood between them and the computer, fearing they would notice that the light switch was on.

The interrogation began and this time my explanation about what had happened was accepted. They did not doubt that I had stumbled to turn the mobile phone off, but they took it away from me so that it would not bother who had to wake up early the next morning.

What had Francisca seen to make her call me at that time of the night? It must have been something really important.

I fell asleep thinking about what had happened.

