

## Fear Has Big Eyes

“Mum, will you please leave the light on!” William asked. He drew the soft blanket, which had teddy bears on it, up to his eyes and stared into the ceiling.

“You’re such a big boy by now that you shouldn’t be afraid of anything,” Mum said.

“I’m not afraid,” William said. “But you could still leave the light on!”

“Do you know the old saying that fear has big eyes?” Mum asked, and explained him what it meant.

“See, once you’re afraid of something, you start imagining all sorts of things. This is why they say that fear has big eyes. Actually, my boy, there’s nothing for you to be scared of in this room.”

Mum smiled and was about to shut the door of the children’s room.

“Will you please also leave the door open?” William asked.

“Alright then,” Mum agreed and left, leaving the door slightly open.

All of a sudden, everything got really quiet. William turned around, onto his belly, and looked at the lantern hanging from a post outside. It kept swaying back and forth and becoming more and more faded. Suddenly, William had a feeling that he saw two eyes on the window glass. The eyes kept growing larger and larger. In the end, they didn’t fit the window anymore and extended to the walls.

Soon enough, the two eyes had covered the entire wall. The room got darker and the eyes on the wall lit up.



“Who are you?” William asked in a trembling voice.

“Fear,” the eyes answered. “I’m your fear.”

“Why do you have such big eyes?” William asked.

“So that I could see the grey man creeping in the hall, the monster with a long trunk hiding under the stairs and little green men bustling about in Dad’s study all at the same time.”

“But can you also see the toothless and half-bald woman lurking in the toilet?”

“Do you mean the one who sticks her head out of the toilet bowl and suck you in?”



“The same one.”

“I see her alright. I can even see the invisible boogie man under your bed.”

William got his bow that was lying beside his bed and shot the arrow right in the middle of the Fear’s eye.

“Ouch!” the Fear squealed.

“Now tell me what you can see?” William asked.

“The grey man in the hall turned into Dad’s coat,” the Fear replied, “and the monster under the stairs is just the vacuum cleaner,”

William got up from bed, went to the hall and looked at the grey man – indeed, it was nothing but a coat. Then he stooped under the stairs and instead of a monster with a long trunk, there was just the vacuum cleaner. When he looked towards Dad’s study, he could see strange green light coming under the door and it seemed to him that there were some shadows moving in there. He could hear suspicious gurgling coming from the toilet.

William quickly went back to his room and shot an arrow into the other eye of the Fear.

“Ouch!” the Fear screeched. “Have mercy on me!” The eyes on the wall faded away until they were really tiny.

William now went back to the toilet, turned on the light and sat on the toilet seat. He sat and waited. At some point he thought there was quiet gurgling coming somewhere from the depths but once he had finished his business, this stopped as well. The boy flushed and stuck his tongue out towards the toilet seat.

The door to Dad’s study was open and William quietly sneaked closer. He could hear the clicking of the keyboard and when William put his head into the room, he saw Dad working at the computer.

“What’s the matter, my boy? Can’t you sleep?”

“I went for a pee,” William said.

Dad gave him a hug and kissed him on the forehead. William got back to his room, went to bed, pulled the soft blanket with teddy bears up to his eyes again and looked at the wall opposite him.



The Fear was gone. The lantern behind the window was burning, emerging soft yellow light and William got fast asleep, dreaming sweet dreams. In his sleep, he could feel how Dad came to tuck his blanket and stroke his head.