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## Monsters - In My Office!?

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ENG 313B

Dr. Rachel Marston

Story 2

### Monsters – In My Office!?

*Author's Note:* Content warning as this story will contain graphic, grotesque descriptions. They won't be anything extraordinary, but I am going to try to incorporate some horror elements to the story. What are some craft techniques that I could've used in this piece to enhance it? And what did you think of this So, sit back, relax, and prepare for a (hopefully) frightening story!

Word Count:3182

*Grimm*, a television series detailing the story of Nick Burkhardt and his trials as a Grimm. Grimms were monster hunters, that could see into the souls of seemingly ordinary people and reveal the monsters within. I kept thinking to myself, wow he's got the coolest life I can think of. At least, that's what I thought.

It was August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017. *Grimm* had wrapped up its final season this past March and it bummed me out. It didn't make my life any brighter that I had to go into the office this morning to repair a station. It's as if these people thought I *liked* working extra hours. Nonetheless, I'd come in, six in the morning no less, and repaired Jen's broken station. Without so much as a nod, she dismisses me without a second thought. On my way out I turn to face her to express my outrage, and to my surprise, the figure I saw seated there wasn't her. It was some form of diseased, maggot-infested husk of a woman that had taken her place. She'd looked so decrepit that I believed even a Hexenbeist would be terrified by the sight of her! As she made to look up at me to figure out just why I hadn't left, I quickly shut the door and held my hand to my heart. What the fuck was that? I gave myself a quick slap to see if I was just dreaming. When I felt the sting of my palm striking my face and the resounding clap of the blow, I knew it wasn't a dream. She truly was a monster. I scrambled out of her office and desperately smashed the elevator call button, I needed to escape back to the bullpen. Could it be possible that...I was a Grimm, or was it that my mind played tricks on me? Maybe I was hallucinating. No, I didn't imagine the smell in there, a stench like rotted milk and meat. I couldn't shake the thought of what if it wasn't real, how fucked in the head am I to have *imagined* that kind of...demon?

I looked for a way to get out of there without seeing anymore people. If this *were* anything like *Grimm*, they'd be able to see what I see in my eyes. I was interrupted by Susan tapping me on the shoulder, a concerned frown on her face. I dared to glance back at her, and

thankfully, she looked normal, inside and out, planting further doubts in my mind about the vision I'd seen. "Hey, Susan. I'm all right, just...unsure if I should be here right about now. It's been a wild morning for me," I looked like a panicked bird trapped in a small room with no escape. It felt like my mind was going to explode from the stress of not being able to see a clear path out of this. Susan had picked up on this and had reached for my arm, attempting to try and comfort me. You can imagine her shock when I nearly jumped a mile away at the sight of her hand on my arm. Fuzzy, light brown fur covered the length of her palm and I couldn't dare to look further. It smelled putrid, like a wet dog caked in its own shit. I could feel sharp, lethal claws gingerly rest atop the surface of my skin, poised to sever my arm at a given moment's notice. She looked at me as if I were crazy and rolled her eyes as she left my cubicle. I'd always been on good terms with Susan, but now? I couldn't ever look at that monster the same again, and it was only getting worse. I heaved in an exasperated breath as I moved swiftly towards the break room. From my encounter with Susan I'd come to two conclusions: while it didn't seem like they could see that I could see them, I would surely die if all of the people I've known for ten years in this place were monsters. I calmed myself for a moment, now was the time to plan a way out of this mess. I took a swig out of my water bottle, and remember thinking of how odd it tasted. It had a slight, but noticeably bitter taste to it. I thought little of it, and made to leave the break room when I see the door open.

"Morning, Sam! You all right there? You look a little...jumpy," David questioningly prodded me. I didn't know quite what to say, as I'd immediately averted my eyes to the ground to avoid looking at anyone directly. The first thing I noticed from David was that the god-awful stench was back again in full force. In my head I screamed out to whatever god was out there to end my suffering, I no longer wanted to be a Grimm, I just wanted my boring life back. David

had placed a hand on my shoulder by now to ascertain just what exactly was taking me so damn long to respond. That was a big mistake; feeling that contact had made me lift my head just enough to see a face contorted into a permanent snarl with several black, jagged teeth protruding from sickly jaws. I could see the back of David's throat, and even parts of the wall behind him with just how many holes had filled his face in. I reacted in poor judgement and had let my hands get away from me, a solid two punches landing square against David's face. The blows knocked him back and disoriented himself enough for me to scramble out of the break room without a shred of my dignity left.

I'd decided it was time to make a mad dash down to the first-floor lobby. I passed a number of my coworkers, each with that exact same disgusting smell about them. I just knew that they would all rip me to shreds if they got their hands on me, and I didn't stop. I turned the corner and was met with another coworker of mine waiting for the elevators. I tried to collect myself, but then I heard David yell from somewhere deep in the bullpen, "Get back here, you bitch! You think you can sucker punch ME and get away with it!? I'll kill you!" You can imagine my reaction to this, I looked at my coworker who was actually normal, and pulled her along with me to the stairwell to escape with me. A startled yelp was all I'd given her time to elicit before we were through the door and into the stair well, hiding from David. I put a finger to my lips and shushed her before she had time to reveal our location to the monster. I took another swig of my water and choked back a sob, we had to move. I had been so bent out of shape, that I hadn't even realized the coworker I'd grabbed was Le'Anne. I looked her up and down, expecting her to turn into some kind of monster, but the change never came. She was still as ugly as one, with her wart-riddled face and appalling personality, but she wasn't a monster like Susan or David. I looked at her as if she were the greatest friend a man could ask for and hugged her.

She fidgeted, clearly uncomfortable but I didn't care, I wasn't the only normal person anymore. I told Le'Anne about what I was seeing and she had yelled out a laugh so harsh and shrill that I thought about jumping down all eighteen floors just to escape it. The response she gave me was what had sealed the deal for me to run. "Well of course we're monsters, you silly goon! Everyone has monsters in them, especially you." I jumped over the railing, plummeting for five floors before my hands caught purchase on one of the railings. I scrambled to pull myself up and over the railing and had managed to get onto the stairwell. I exhaled an exhausted breath; I was at my wit's end with all this running and seeing my coworkers for who they were. I took another swig of my water and emptied it, throwing the bottle behind me as I made my way down to the lobby.

It was a long trip down, but thankfully I didn't encounter anyone in the stairwell. Perhaps monsters were the reason no one ever took the stairs? I pondered that question as I placed a timid hand on the lock release. I was terrified of encountering more monsters, but the lobby was normally busy enough, perhaps I'd be able to sneak away unseen? I opened the door, and immediately regretted my decision. All eyes in the room, some two, some four, some with eyes all over, were all aimed at me. I nearly shit myself, as I tried to maintain a bit of my composure and walked towards the front door. I placed my hand on the handle, nearly home-free, when I felt a heavy hand place itself on my shoulder. It was David. I could feel his hot, raging breath on the base of my neck, the condensation building up and trickling down my spine. I didn't dare to face him as he spoke to me. "So, you thought you were gonna get off without so much as a bit of sweat on your face? Not today, you little shit!" David had taken me by surprise with his raw strength, picking me up and throwing me towards the receptionists' desk at the center of the lobby. I made contact with the floor and rolled, my head connecting with the floor with each

successive roll. I didn't even get up fully when my met David's boot intimately, my head bouncing off the receptionists' desk repeatedly with each kick. Dazed, I threw a clumsy hand out in front of my face, luckily catching David's foot. Surprised as he was, David hadn't missed a beat and reached down to try and pull me up. I ducked out of the way and using my weight, I rolled his legs out from under him, his chin colliding with the granite top of the receptionists' desk. That gave me enough time to scramble for the door and pull it open. Another hand reached for my arm. Some form of lizardman wearing a security outfit had tried to hinder me. His cracked lips and split tongue flapped vainly trying to tell me to calm down. Pretty soon I slipped him one of my more impressive right hooks, and took his taser and nightstick and left the building.

I ran down to the nearby *Starbucks* and fell to the ground in exhaustion. I'd looked towards the television and saw that the commotion I made had made the local news. The by-line read, "Man high on hallucinogens, terrorizes office and is now armed and dangerous." High on hallucinogens? I've never touched the stuff; how could I have been laced? Only one thing stuck out to me that could possibly have been laced, my water. I lived alone, and didn't see any possible way my water could have been tainted. I had no friends, few family nearby, and my neighbors and I tolerated each other. I shook my head clear of the thoughts and moved towards the barista. I froze when I realized that everyone was looking at me, fear in their eyes as they looked for a way out of the store. Then I realized, it wasn't me they were looking at. David, somehow, had managed to follow me all the way here. It was as if the holes in his face had given him some sort of super sense. I paced back and prepared to use the taser on him. Breathing heavily, David looked like a man gone rabid, his grey, soulless eyes had been overcast with menace, and I turned to see if anyone else could see it too. We all could. "You thought taking

this to the public would save your ass? Not today, it won't," David grunted out, lunging at me to grab hold of me. I dived beyond his reach and pulled out the taser in one go, aiming it at his chest and pulling the trigger. To my surprise, David simply looked down at the electrodes and pulled them off his chest without so much as flinching and yanks the taser out of my hands. I would have to do this the hard way again. Drawing the nightstick, I waved it in front of me, unsure of how to handle it. As David lunged at me again, I slipped past him and struck down on the back of his knee, aiming to take the beast down to a knee. Successful as I was, it made no difference. I moved to choke David out from behind, but he'd reached around for me and had gotten me square against the floor. The next fifteen seconds were excruciation at its finest. The only thing I saw before blackness was David's meaty fist driving its way down towards my face. The first punch was sloppy, grazing off my cheek. The second was more precise, a killer blow right for the nose, and it was broken on impact. Blood streamed down the sides of my face like makeshift tears as David kept throwing punches at my face. Another hit my eye, a blow I knew would force it swell shut. Finally, the final blow made was what had driven me to unconsciousness. David had drawn back his fist, compacted it and swung, connecting squarely with my jaw.

\*

A few days had passed by the time I'd awoken. I was unsure as to where exactly I was. It was sterile, white but it didn't smell like a normal hospital. I couldn't hear the cries of babies or their vexed mothers pleading with them to calm down, be patient, don't be scared, any number of placative responses to get their crotch spawns to shut up. No, this was a lot more private, governmental almost. I pitched up and found myself strapped down to the gurney. I groaned, the pain from my prior fight with David still fresh. My head couldn't move, tied down, and I could



only see out of one of my eyes. I looked out of my left eye to see a glass wall, three people in lab coats typing away at a computer that must've been used to log my vitals for the past few days. One of them, a frail looking man, had warts and stray hairs about his body. Terror filled my mind as I started convulsing, trying to free myself from the shackles these devils had bound me in. I ended up flipping the gurney onto its side, evoking even more pain to spring to the forefront of my mind, fanning the fire that fueled my terror. The door to my room flung open, as the three figures in white rushed in to correct my position. "Calm down, Samuel, you're not under any threat! You're safe," the lead on whatever hellish project this was insisted, "you're safe!" I calmed, only partially, mistrustfully eyeing the wart covered man. He looked ashamed of his condition as a result of my staring, and that brought me some pleasure. A monster should be ashamed for what it is. That was rude of me to think, the realization softening my gaze on the frail man. He had a name, I realized, they all did. On their little name cards, I'd learned that the 'monster' was named Charles, the lead, Charlie, and the third man was Chuck. Charlie was the most comforting of the three, his flowing brunette mullet, heavily outdated, made me chuckle internally. They released my restraints finally, allowing me to move around for a moment.

"So, what is this place," I groaned out, the pain of moving my jaw almost too much to process at that point. I'd expected them to say some sort of secret government facility, but their faces looked concerned as to whether or not they should tell me. I furrowed my brow in frustration and waved my hand dismissively to indicate that I'd lost interest in the answer. Instead, I pointed at Charles and said, "You, you're one of them aren't you? Something like David and Le'Ann?" Charles nodded, and pointed to the monitor that revealed itself from a hidden containment unit behind the wall. A list of the world's most influential, rich and ferocious people, were apart of this race of...freaks. There were those that looked like horses, those that

had hair shaggy and loose like an orangutan. There were those that had some sort of special apparatus that kept them functioning and those that had eyes as big as footballs. All of these entities were all given codenames. The umbrella term for them were the E'She-Ni, ordinary people that could willfully swap between the ordinary and extraordinary. Being able to see these beings for what they truly were made me a Nu'Tau. I couldn't help but wonder how widespread is this. Are these things in my apartment building just a floor away? What about others like me, what's their purpose in all this? I looked to Charles and asked the only question I could, "What *the fuck* is all of this? How could you hide all of this from the world and its people? Do you know how hard it was to get out of that office building," I aggressively questioned them, jabbing a finger into Charlie's chest with each question. The nerve of these fools to paint me as crazy, knowing full well that I was simply a man terrified of the world he'd only just discovered. It was times like these that he'd longed to have had a genuine relationship with his parents. He'd never known them growing up, and if he had, perhaps he'd have handled it all better, or perhaps he'd be a better fighter so that when he eventually did find out he'd be ready. The thought had started to force tears to well up at the brims of his eyelids, threatening to teeter off and down his cheeks.

"We're sorry," the trio spoke in unison now, "We could only reveal this all to you once you'd encountered it for yourself."

"Bullshit and you know it!" I replied, outraged by their response. They would bring me no peace, and I'd asked to be released. Forlorn, the trio granted my request, and had informed me that someone would be in touch soon. I grunted an annoyed sound and made no further protests.

\*

I'd finally gotten home, the cab ride back had been a frustrating experience, the driver asking me a multitude of aggravating questions. I moved to my bedroom, collapsing into the comfort of my mattress and comforter. As I watched my ceiling fan spin, I thought back to what Le'Ann had said before.

Maybe we do all have monsters inside us.