

## *No way out*

I am not sure of how long I've been running for or how far I was now, but my heart was beating so loudly in my ears that I had to stop, in fear that the thing could hear it too.

Closing my eyes, I took a deep breath and focused on the noise instead: wolves howled in the distance, the sound mangled from the awful storm, whose aggressiveness banged against the windows seeming it desperately wanted to enter the building and consume my very soul. However, there were no footsteps, no screams, no growls, nothing.

There was only silence, and I, for once, felt safe.

*Safe? How can you feel safe, Malorie? Hell has swallowed you whole! You'll only be truly safe when you die. There's no way out of this nightmare.*

I shook my head and opened my eyes, trying to keep these intrusive thoughts away.

I then realized that if I stayed in this bright corridor any longer, the abomination would probably be able to find me again sooner than preferable. And so, as one would, I kept on walking, looking at the messages on the walls written messily in, what I came to learn in the worst possible way ever, human blood.

I then stopped to look at the biggest of the messages. Snuggly between two rusty doors, the word "Witch", where the "t" looked more like a cross than anything else, dripped onto the floor, its smell and bright colour telling me that it was fresh---*way too fresh.*

The rattle of those horrid heavy chains brought me back to the sad reality and so, in a rush of panic, I entered the room to my left, even though I wish I hadn't. As I hid under a small table in the corner and tried to listen carefully for the beast's movements, the nauseating stench of what seemed like rotten lettuce and human flesh invaded my nostrils.

There was no less than a dead body under the same table as I was, its head severed. It gave me such fright that a piercing screech manages to escape from my mouth, the very same one the monster heard.

I felt it in my bones as his stupid chains jingled on the floor and then he started banging on the rusty door violently, clearly with the intent of breaking it down. I needed to get out of here and *fast.*

Scrambling as far away from the corpse as I could, without getting out of my hiding place, I tried to look for a way out, spotting an opened window to my right.

*Oh, but I am so high up! There is no chance of me surviving the fall!*

The storm still hadn't died down one bit, and the violent night sky made me wonder where my brother was. Was he still at home, in Europe? Or was he, by any means, looking for me? Oh, Jacob, I am so terribly sorry.

The only other way out of this room would be from the second rusty door, which would lead me to the same corridor where the beast was, but where would I go afterward? I am too weak to outrun it, and, even if I could, I certainly wouldn't go back from where I came.

As the pounding on the door got faster and harder, I started to cry and thought back to The Man Below. Had I accepted his deal and become his bride and I wouldn't be in this situation now, but rather outside, in the courtyard, drowning in the forest's fog knowing that he would keep me safe.

*God, that feeling of safety again.*

The door finally gave way and fell heavily to the floor, the creature now in full view. I held my breath; its striking mutilated eyes scanned the room and it growled before slowly walking forward.

It was looking for me, sniffing the air like a wild animal until it put its disgusting blackened claws on top of the table I was hiding under.

In an effortless push, the table went flying to the nearest wall, where it broke into a million pieces like a cheap china jar.

Making full-on eye contact, the beast picked the beheaded corpse and rose it into its mouth, taking a squishy bite out of it.

I suppressed the urge to throw up and then the monster's bloody mouth curled into what could only be depicted as a disturbing smile as if he was saying "You're next."

I held onto my bloody knees and whimpered, accepting my unforgiving fate as a whole.

Goodbye, Jacob.

I hope to see you soon.

*Very, very soon...*

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**Maria Mendes, 12<sup>o</sup>F**

# A DIFFERENT HALLOWEEN

Ryan opened his eyes, and, at the same second, he wished he hadn't. He looked to the calendar that was in front of his bed and his humour got worse. The teenager hated to wake up early and, to make it even worse, it was October 31<sup>st</sup>, which meant that he was finally living the worst day of the year: Halloween. You're probably wondering "Why does he hate Halloween so much?"

That question takes us precisely to seven years ago. It was the night of October 31<sup>st</sup> and the boy was dressed as a wolf, since wolves were his favourite animals. He was standing in front of an old house near his home. The closest illumination was the light inside a lone pumpkin placed on the gate that protected the house. The boy's first instinct was to turn his back on the house and leave but with the idea of receiving sweets, he swallowed his fear and went ahead.

- Be brave! - He thought to himself.

Ryan arrived at the porch stairs of the house and went up the steps very slowly. The wood was old, and it creaked at every little step the boy took. Anyway, the boy didn't care, since his goal was finally in front of him: the door. The wolf knocked three times on the door and at the third time the door opened. Ryan was about to say "Trick or Treat" when he realized that no one was behind the door. He didn't know what to do but his internal struggle was interrupted when the boy saw a massive frame on the wall of the mysterious house. The frame had depicted a young woman dressed as a bride. While Ryan tried to capture all the details of the painting, an object moved across the room. The wolf got a fright, and he noticed that the flying object was a cross. Then the most unexpected happened, a feminine and deep voice, screamed:

- What are you doing at my house?

Ryan followed the source of the voice and got incredulous because the woman in the frame was talking! The boy opened his mouth so wide that the scenery that he created could easily be compared to the painting by Edward Munch, *The Scream*. The bride was not bothered by Ryan's surprise and continued saying:

- I was able to stay a year without being disturbed by any of you kids! You ruined all the peace that I created!

The bride continued to complain about the situation, but the wolf did not stay there much longer since he started to run away from that haunted house with his heart leaping.

Ryan got goosebumps just by thinking about that memory. Anyway, he quickly got distracted since he needed to get prepared for another day of school. He got dressed and looked through the window: it was raining, which was not a big surprise for the boy since he lived in England, Europe. The rain was so heavy that it felt like a storm, but Ryan knew it wouldn't stop people from celebrating Halloween.

He hurried and, after 15 minutes, the boy was sitting at the desk in the classroom. The teacher started the class and as it progressed the boy felt his fatigue getting worse and worse.

- I'm in the last row, if I close my eyes for a moment, maybe the teacher won't notice. - He thought to himself.

Obviously, the boy fell asleep and a dream, or better said, a nightmare began to unfold inside his head. Ryan felt a cold draft pass through him, and he quickly opened his eyes, thinking that he had been left alone inside the room and that all his colleagues had returned home without him. He felt confusion flood into his head when he looked around just to find out that he was surrounded by a forest and that the haunted house he had visited on the worst day of his life was about 30 meters away. Ryan felt his bones and muscles freeze just by looking to the house in his front, but he decided to enter the house hoping that he would be able to contact someone.

Ryan was quickly in front of the door but, instead of deciding to knock like the last time, he decided to directly push the door. He took three small steps into the house and suddenly the door slammed shut. Ryan turned to the door with the aim of opening it.

- Welcome back boy! - Said a feminine and deep voice, that Ryan remembered perfectly.

- Let me get out now! - The boy screamed, consumed by fear.

Ryan turned around slowly, and he concluded that the big picture remained the same, there was only one difference: the woman was dressed as a witch this time. She opened her mouth again and the boy prepared himself for what she was about to say.

- I'll be brief, my goal was not to scare you the first time I met you. Obviously, that was exactly what happened. I scared you so much that you started to hate Halloween. Anyway, I want to make a deal with you: if you go back to enjoy and celebrate Halloween like you used to do, you'll never have to see me again, not even in nightmares. Do you accept it? -She asked.

- Yes, I accept your deal! - Ryan said, insecure. - Can I ask you just one final question?

- Of course!

- Why are you dressed differently every time I see you?

- It's Halloween day, we always have to keep the spirit and celebrate it as if it were our last! - Said the woman, with a big smile.

Ryan blinked his eyes, and he was suddenly back in the classroom, with no idea of what had happened. The boy only had one certainty: from that day on he finally had a reason to celebrate Halloween again.

**Tamara Silva, 10ºB**

# Little Red Riding Hood

## The truth

Once upon a time, a girl known to many as the little red riding hood. You have probably heard of her story, but it has been distorted over the years, until it came to you as a children's fable, however, the real story behind the fable is extremely terrifying and not at all childlike.

The story begins on the eve of Halloween, in Romania, the country that has 20% of the population of wolves in Europe, in a historic area called Transylvania.

## Chapter I

A happy little girl dressed in a red cloak, Scarlett, is hiding with her boyfriend, Peter, through her bedroom window so that Scarlett's grandmother doesn't see them.

Grandma- Scarlett, come here at the door!

There is a crowd of villagers outside of your home. They plan to go after a giant wolf that has been killing sheep flocks in the village.

Scarlett, who is very adventurous and an excellent archer, quickly asks if she can go hunting with them. So, grandmother soon orders him to stay inside with his cloak, according to the grandmother, the red chases away the wolves.

Scarlett- So, why aren't the villagers dressed in red too?

Grandma- They are fools!!

After slamming the door in the face of the crowd, grandmother and the Capuchin begin to barricade the house against the wolf, locking all the doors with iron beams and closing the fireplace with a railing. After the house is completely fortified, grandmother tells Scarlett to lock herself in the room with the hood on her head while she sits in the room during the vigil, with a crossbow ready to shoot towards the door.



# Chapter II

The next morning, Scarlett, without a mantle, asks her grandmother if she managed to sleep:

Grandmother (pretending not to have dozed off during the entire vigil) - I closed my eyes for two minutes. But I couldn't hear anything because of the storm outside. And you?

Scarlett- I slept well, but I had a terrible nightmare!

Grandma- Nightmares are just bad dreams. Can you please go check on all the chickens and bring them a lettuce?

Upon opening the chicken coop door, Scarlett gets fright upon seeing a sudden figure. Upon approaching, with the bow ready to fire, he discovers that the figure was actually a homeless girl.

Homeless- Wait, wait!! My name is Daisy, I was just hiding.

Scarlett- I'm Scarlett, hide from whom?

Daisy- I was trapped by a witch, but I managed to escape while she was sleeping, when I got here, I heard howls of a giant creature and I hid.

# Chapter III

Scarlett takes her new friend to a nearby well to drink, explaining that there is a wolf terrorizing the village. As they discover, the creature is no longer just killing sheep. The well's water is colored a deep red - and there are dozens of mutilated bodies scattered on the snowy soil around it. It is a horrifying sight.

After a meeting between the villagers about the end of the wolf's reign of terror, grandmother asks for silence and tells what happened to her in the past:

Grandmother- 60 years ago, at another time and with another wolf, I saw him slaughtering my five brothers one by one, ripping them off, followed by my own mother. In the end the wolf stared at me and scratched me leaving this scar. "You don't kill him, you just hide."

# Chapter III

Scarlett hates the fact that her grandmother is keeping her in confinement and just wants to flee with Peter to another land and become his bride, however she knows that she won't be able to do it while the wolf is around. It is then that he decides to go with Daisy after the wolf when it is dawn, so they would be able to kill him while he sleeps.

Scarlett and Daisy go into the forest, looking for giant wolf tracks. Scarlett, of course, is a born tracker; she easily discovers the wolf's path. But as they follow the trail, they notice something strange: the footprints in the snow change from paws to boots. "Wolves don't wear boots."

Everything is even more curious when the trail leads directly to Scarlett's window - which implies that Peter, who had been at the window, last night, was actually a werewolf.

Daisy advises Scarlett to speak to her boyfriend. While she impersonates herself, using her cloak, to deceive her grandmother.

Scarlett follows her friend's advice, meeting with Peter to tell him that he is a werewolf. She explains that she has to tie him up before the moon rises so he doesn't kill anyone. The Capuchin tells Peter that he has nothing to worry about, because she will be by his side all the time. And in the meantime, you'll be wearing a new attractive white cover.



# Chapter V

Grandmother enters Scarlett's room and finds that her granddaughter is gone. Daisy, dressed in Scarlett's cloak, assures her grandmother that her granddaughter is fine - she just chained Peter in the middle of the forest, no big deal.

Grandmother (holding hands to head) - OHHH, Unfortunate guy!!!

Suddenly grandmother takes her crossbow and starts running towards the forest, explaining the truth to Daisy along the way. Scarlett's great-grandfather was actually the werewolf who killed her grandmother's family. He also turned his grandmother into a werewolf, although she doesn't change now that she's old. Scarlett has been started to change when she was 13. And since then it has been transformed every night on the last day of the month, which is why her grandmother forces her to stay at home and wear the red robe, since the same one, which is made of a fabric blessed by the priest and that the cross that serves as a button is made of silver, prevents it from transforming.

The old lady sniffs Scarlett and when they reach a clearing, they find Peter and Scarlett transformed. Unfortunately, it is too late to save poor Peter who is completely torned apart.

Before grandmother manages to bring down the beast with one of its silver arrows, the creature repels its weapon by rubbing it with its paw and scratching the grandmother's hands, causing them to become bloody.

But before the beast manages to take grandmother's life, Daisy grabs the crossbow and in an act of bravery shoots an arrow right at Scarlett's chest, then covers it with the cloak, and she immediately changes again. The girl barely has time to be horrified by what she did and who she is, since in the distance a furious crowd is looking for the wolf.

Grandmother sends the two of them running home and is alone against the oncoming rebel crowd of villagers.

When the villagers arrive, when they see the bloody hands of their grandmother and Peter's corpse, they consider that it was in fact grandmother who was passing for a wolf to kill her granddaughter's boyfriend and not get the blame for the murder. And before grandmother could justify that situation, she is stoned by the furious crowd.

Scarlett, who had gone into hiding as her grandmother had told her, when she stopped hearing noise, decided to go and see if her grandmother was okay. Upon finding the body of the grandmother, the girl is extremely tormented by removing her red hood and allowing herself to be possessed by her animal spirit, haunting to this day the forests of Transylvania.



Little Red Riding Hood – The Truth

**Paulo Oliveira, 12<sup>a</sup>B**

## *Halloween Fright*

Welcome, dear reader, my name is Mister Nightmare, at your services and I will be the storyteller. So please, dear reader, make yourself comfortable, get a cross and holy water, as you will need them. These stories will send a chill down your spine.

Before starting the first story, let's talk a little bit about "Halloween". To begin, I must say I love seeing the masked children ask for "trick or treat", but what I love the most is scaring these same children.

Halloween originated in the Celtic people, although with another name 'Samhain Festival'. It's a Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year. It was also the day to pay tribute to the King of the Dead.

Talking about the dead, let's start with the first story:

«Grandma Julieta»

In a village near a forest, there lived a very sweet and caring old lady, better known as Grandma Juliet, and her friendly dog pumpkin. This old lady used to make a charity snack in the afternoon after Halloween night. This snack brought all the people in her village together around a large wooden table.

What these villagers did not know is that on Halloween night the witch Milena incarnated in this old lady, and her faithful dog turned into ferocious wolves with empty looks. Tonight, Milena and her wolves hunted pets in all neighboring villages and cooked them into several different dishes.

In the next morning, Milena's spirit left the body of the old lady and as she saw many prepared dishes, she innocently used them to set the table and serve them for the snack.

So, dear reader if you are going to trick or treat and an old lady offers you tasty food, think twice before eating it.

Well, it even gave me the creeps, and it was still the first story. If the excellent reader is not yet frightened, then the next story is one that even scares fear. And this story is called:

«The vindictive groom»

Once upon a time, there was a blonde and elegant man named Pedro, and this man worked in the interior of the country, more precisely in a quiet village. Pedro stayed at an inn called Eastern Europe, led by three women, a mother and two daughters.

Pedro, a man who was going to get married, was abandoned at the altar by his bride and as a desire for revenge, Pedro started killing single women, dismembering them and putting them in boxes. Then he sent them to remote houses.

After some time, unmarried women began to disappear in this same village. So, an investigation took place, and everything pointed to the inn, more precisely to Pedro's room, where he was still covered in blood and with the parts of both the owner of the inn's daughters.

They also found that Peter was one of his many pseudonyms.

So, dear reader, if you receive an order with parts of women's bodies, it was Pedro who sent it as a gift to you.

I hope I scared you at least a little bit because now we are going to continue with one last story, called:

«Look back, Lucia»

Once upon a time, there was a girl called Lucia who lived with her parents and her dog.

Lucia had a habit, on storm nights. When she woke up by lightning, she put her hand out of her bed, because her dog slept next to her. It licked her so that Lucia would not fear the lightning.

On a certain stormy night, Lucia felt something dripping in the bathroom, and as usual, she put her hand out of the bed and her dog licked it. Then, as it was too early, Lucia fell asleep.

After a while, she woke up again because of the dripping and she decided to check and close the tap. When she arrived at the bathroom, she saw what was causing these drops: it was the pet hanging in the shower spilling blood, drop by drop, and when she looked into the mirror, she could read, written with the dog's blood: « Look back, Lucia ».

When she looked back, she saw a black figure that killed her immediately.

And with that our scary stories end. I hope you got scared yours.

Happy Halloween, dear reader.

And remember, there is no need to be afraid of the dark because you are not alone in your room at night.

**Ana Santos, 10ºA**

## ***HALLOWEEN NIGHT***

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Anna was very happy. It was Halloween night and she was going to a party with her friends and she was sure she would see John there. She was so in love with him. Her costume was very funny as she was going as half-bride and half-witch.

While she was getting ready, she was listening to the radio. The music suddenly stopped and there was a news flash about a serial killer who had escaped from a Mental Hospital. They said that the man was very dangerous and that he had only one hand as the other was replaced by a hook. The news reporter was alerting people to be very careful but Anna was so excited that she didn't pay much attention to it.

When they arrived at the party, a storm was coming so they felt a little frightened to be there because the party was outside, but they were sure they would have fun anyway.

Anna knew that John was dressed as a wolf but there were so many wolves that she couldn't find him. Then, she suddenly saw someone carving a pumpkin. She was sure it was John! She was so happy to see him. Even as an ugly wolf with lots of make-up, he was very handsome. When the boy saw her, he stopped what he was doing and went towards her.

Anna couldn't feel her legs as she was so nervous to be near him. "I like you as a bride but I like you more as a witch! Are you a good or a bad witch?", asked John. She felt so embarrassed. It was the first time he talked to her like that. "I don't know. I think I'm good but it depends on the person I'm putting my spells on!" She couldn't believe she was flirting with John, the most handsome boy in college. However, he looked strange that night. "Do you want to go for a walk? This party is getting boring!" said John. "Sure! Let me just tell my friends that I'm leaving!", "No, let's go now!" he shouted.

They started walking away from the party. Anna was amazed and scared at the same time. It was really dark and the rain was coming and they were going into a forest. John put his arm around her and she felt a little more secure but when she looked at his hand, it was a hook, not a hand!!

She started screaming and she tried to run away but he was holding her too tight. That's when Anna realised it wasn't John and she remembered listening to something about a serial killer and a hook! She was in panic! She just wanted this to be a nightmare but it wasn't.

She remembered she had a cross in her bag as part of her witch costume. She grabbed it and stabbed it in the man's arm and ran away as fast as she could. She arrived at the party and her friends were looking for her but she was so nervous that she couldn't speak. She just said "Call the police! The hook man is in the forest!"

Luckily the police arrested him and he was taken back to the Mental Hospital. At the end of the night, Anna saw the real John. He went to her and asked her if she was ok. When she looked into his eyes, she was sure it was him. The good wolf!

The police were offering a reward for anyone who helped them catch the serial killer, so Anna won a trip to Europe and she invited John to go with her. They had an amazing time and decided they would never dress up for Halloween again!

**Beatriz Santos, 12<sup>o</sup>H**

## *Bird Cry*

In a time where witches, werewolves and vampires are only products of nightmares, in a foggy forest in Eastern Europe, where a mighty war was being fought, one small group of soldiers was facing certain defeat. Suddenly all the noise caused by bullets, steps, grenades, and chaos was silenced. All that the soldiers could hear was what seemed to be birds flying.

*Flap, flap, flap...*

As the time passed the birds came closer...

*FLAP, FLAP, FLAP...*

It did not take too long, until the silence became screams of despair. The small Platoon got curious, and as soon as a soldier got up to look over the trenches, it was if he had seen his greatest fear right in front of him. As he fell on the ground, the rest of the group tried to understand what was wrong with him... it was all in vain... The second they looked in his eyes, they started presenting the same symptoms... This platoon had faced a strong enemy before but, this was not strong... this was undefeatable.

Three days passed ... Since no one at the headquarters had heard anything from that platoon, they sent another team to secure the area and retrieve any possible survivor, from the hands of the enemy. But when they got there, they did not see any war scenario... there were no trenches, no landmines, no weapons, no corpses ... Nothing... The area was quickly closed so that no civilian got there. When inspecting the whole area all they could find, besides plants, were some Red Feathers in the middle of the forest. Upon closer inspection, the lab team, realized that the feathers were wet... It did not take them too long to realize that the Feathers were not red, but white, and that they were not wet with water, but with blood... *Human Blood*.

Filled with fright, no one dared to stay there. A few months passed and one night, after a huge storm, in a farm next to the forest, a bride was preparing herself for the wedding the day after. As she glanced outside, she noticed a group of white ravens, with red eyes on top of the dark trees near the forest. A little after that she began to hear the howling of a wolf and as she looks outside again, there was no sound at all. Only the ravens were audible. It seemed the forest was growing into the farm. She tried to scream but it was as if her vocal cords had been cut off. She could not move, scream, or hear anything. All she could do was hold her cross and cry over the fresh lettuces... a few seconds later her father rushed to the room after hearing her scream... pure agony flushed his eyes with tears, as he could only find her cross and some Feathers soaked in blood.

Day after day...week after week... the forest grew, and the people of that land disappeared into the woods. Some say the forest is still growing and feeding from the people who cut it down for their own good, others say it is a spirit from the past who is controlling the birds. But the fact is, whatever it was... No one, who got close enough, came out to tell the story.

**Eduardo Domingos, 11ºH**