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Nightmares
by Nathaniel Tong

I was playing Geometry Dash in my room on my bed. My eyes were fixed on the screen as the icon dodged spikes and saws. The level I was playing, Bloodbath, was one of the game’s most iconic and hard levels. The icon flew through an outcropping of spikes when all of a sudden, I heard the familiar sound of the icon dying.

“NOOOOOO!” I shouted. I’d just died at thirty-two percent, which wasn’t very impressive to begin with, but I had failed there so many times I’d lost count “I would’ve beat it!! I would’ve beat it!” I slammed my computer shut trying to control my anger.

My eyes felt heavy and I decided I should get to bed. I shut off the lights and pulled my blanket over me. I fell asleep to the sound of silence.

Dreams plagued me like usual, more specifically nightmares. I was in my school except no one was there. Lockers hung open and padlocks were broken on the floor as if someone had ripped apart everything.

As I walked through the hallways trying to find a clue as to why everything was like this, I turned a corner, and found a weird stain on the floor that looked like dried paint...or something else.

Just as I walked around the puddle, I almost had a heart attack when I heard a bloodcurdling scream. I spun around to find nothing but a shadow. “Hello?” I asked shakily. I walked towards the shadow expecting to see someone. The weird stain from earlier was gone.

I started to panic. I ran through the hallways as fast as I could. I heard more screams behind me and they were getting louder. I ran into a classroom that I didn’t recognize. I slammed the door, found a chair, and jammed it under the door handle. Exhausted, I slumped against the wall when all of a sudden something screamed next to me!

A pool of sweat surrounded me as I sat up, realizing that it must’ve been a dream. I climbed out of my bed and went into the bathroom to brush my teeth. Then I opened my computer and got on Geometry Dash. Instead of the usual title screen, there was my name, Nathaniel, smack dab in the middle of it. This wouldn’t have been too strange except the letters were spread across a spiderweb of cracks on the screen. “What the-?” I spun around thinking I had heard something. I ran out of my room and into my parents’ bedroom. There was nothing. I ran back out into the hallway and shouted, “MOM? DAD? EMMA?” There was no response. Then it hit me: This was a dream! I had somehow had the nightmare then dreamed I had woken up!

I had to get out of this horrible nightmare. In desperation I whipped open the front door and burst outside. Again, I heard a scream! I started to run from it. It was closing on me fast. I turned a corner and found myself coming up on Mulliken Park. I hurdled the slide, jumped onto the bench and scrambled up the Big Pine.

The Big Pine was the only pine tree in the entire park, and it was humongous with needly branches and sturdy limbs that made excellent seats.

The lowest branch was right in front of me so I leapt onto the huge plant like I was a squirrel. But the thing was right behind me. I sensed it coming closer and closer and then it screamed: "Wake up!! Wake up!!" I closed my eyes and when I opened them, I was staring at the ceiling of my room. I heard it again and realized it was my dad calling me for school.

I jumped out of my bed and yelled, "Coming!!" I ran downstairs, ate breakfast then tripped on the stairs as I rushed to go brush my teeth. I changed my clothes and got ready for school.