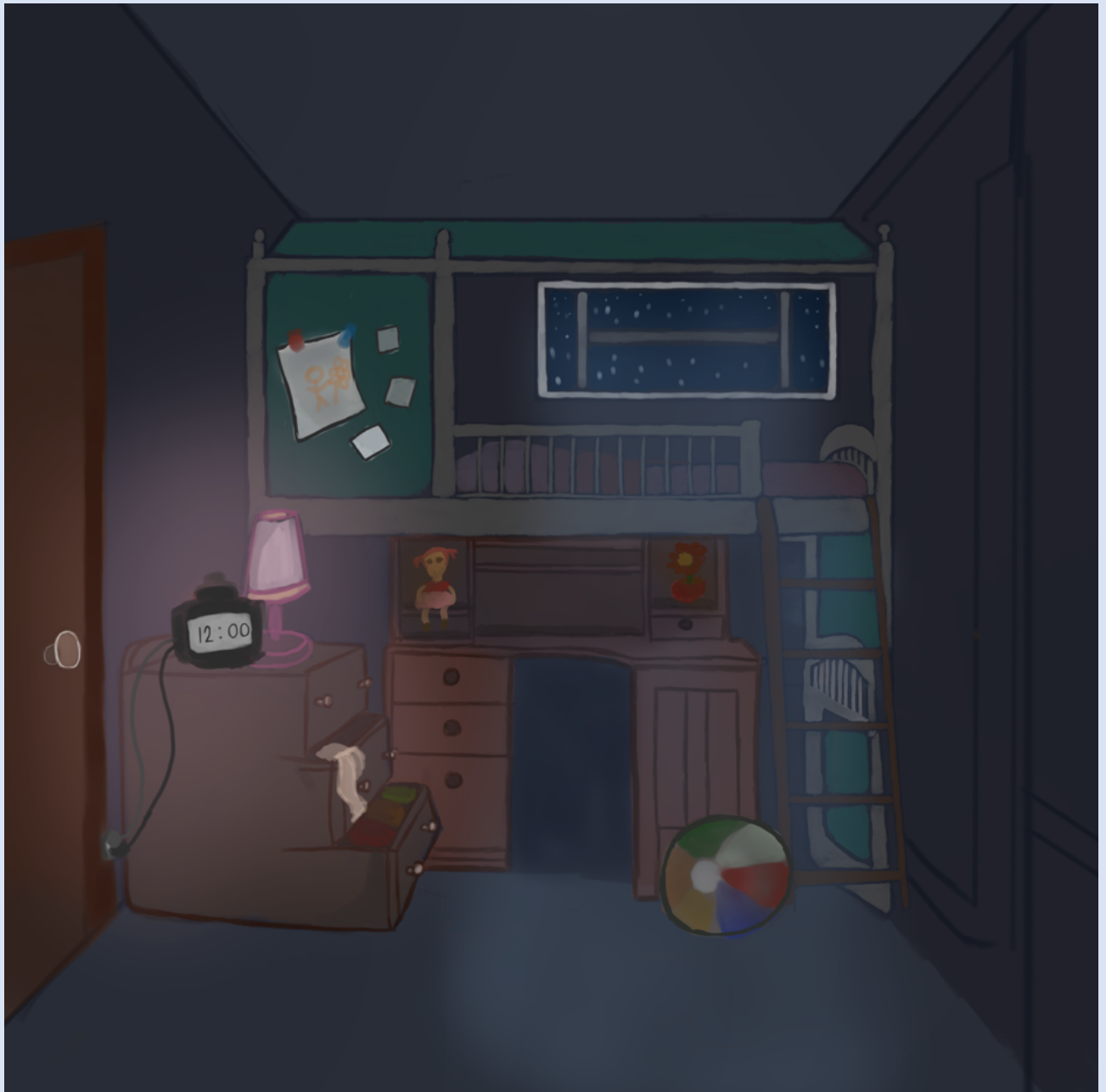
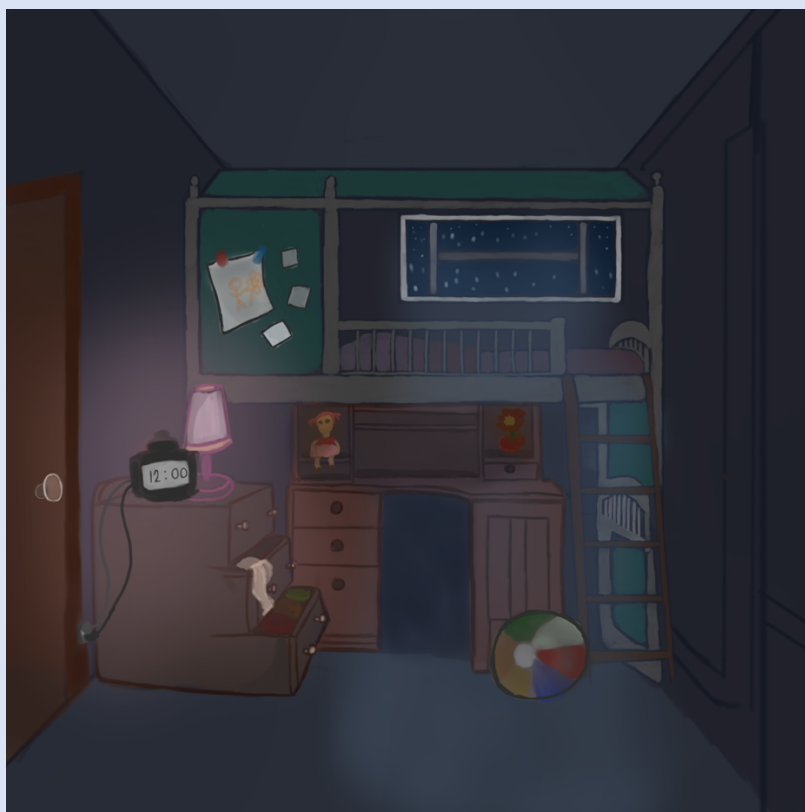


Monsters at Midnight



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by Steven Tabor and Marco Gatti
Illustrations by Anna Sofia Gatti



Monsters at Midnight

The little girl went
promptly to bed at 8 pm,
because that WAS her bedtime.

Most nights,
after her Mommy and Daddy
had tucked her in,
and given her a big hug
and kiss goodnight,
the lights would go out,
and she would fall asleep, in a flash.

But tonight was different.
It was raining heavily.
Lightning and thunder were flashing
and pounding outside her window.

There was a big “crack”
and the little girl awoke.
She didn’t know what time
it was and the clock by
the side of her bed
flashed “12” “12” and “12” again.



The little girl was frightened.
She called out to her Mommy and Daddy
to please come quick.

She called them three times,
and finally they came.

“What’s wrong” asked her Mommy?
“It’s just the thunder and the rain”, she said.
“You’ve got nothing to be scared of”
added her Daddy.

Then her Mommy gave her a big hug
and then her Daddy gave her a big kiss,
and they tucked in the little girl under her
blanket.

They checked to make sure her
night light was working and then
they said to her:

“Sleep well, sweetie”
“Sweet dreams”

And then they walked quietly out of
her room and closed her door.

The little girl was alone again
in her dark bedroom,
with the rain and the wind pounding
on her window.

“Oh,” she sighed, and said to herself,
“I don’t like being alone on rainy
nights like this.”

“And just what exactly makes you think
you are alone here”, she heard.

“Who is talking to me?” she asked.

“I’m the Pancake Monster”
answered her blanket.

“You’re what?” asked the little girl.

“I said, my name is the Pancake Monster”
answered the blanket.

“But blankets can’t talk”, replied the little girl.

“Really?”, replied the Pancake Monster.

“Well yes, but..... I don’t understand”.
said the little girl.

“It’s simple.”, the Pancake Monster said,

*“At midnight,
when the rains are pouring,
lightning flashing and thunder roaring,
we bedroom monsters come alive.
For in the darkness we do thrive.
And if you are open-hearted,
delightful conversation can get started”.*

The little girl thought about this,
and she thought some more,
and then she decided,
why not?
I am talking with my blanket.
I mean with the Pancake Monster.
So this must be happening. It must be real.

Then the little girl asked:
“Why are you called the Pancake Monster?”
“Aren’t monster’s bad and scary?”

“Bad and scary, what nonsense!”
replied the Pancake Monster.



“People think that monsters are bad,
because they just don’t know us.
If they gave us a chance,
and opened their hearts to us,
then they’d understand
that we are good, kind and sweet to all.”

The Pancake Monster added:
“The reason they call me
the Pancake Monster
is that every night
I lie flat and silent on the bed
and keep you warm and sweet,
just like a pancake
fresh from the oven,
covered in sugar and maple syrup.”



That made sense to the little girl.
She liked the feeling of being
covered by a warm pancake,
fresh from the oven.

“Are there other,
um, um, other monsters in my bedroom?”
asked the little girl a bit nervously.

“Of course there are”,
answered the Pancake Monster.
“let me introduce you to some of
my dear monster friends.”

At that, the wind blew very hard
and the closet in the little girls room
rattled and banged, rattled and banged,
and rattled and banged some more.

“What was that” asked the little girl?
“Oh that’s just me” answered the closet.

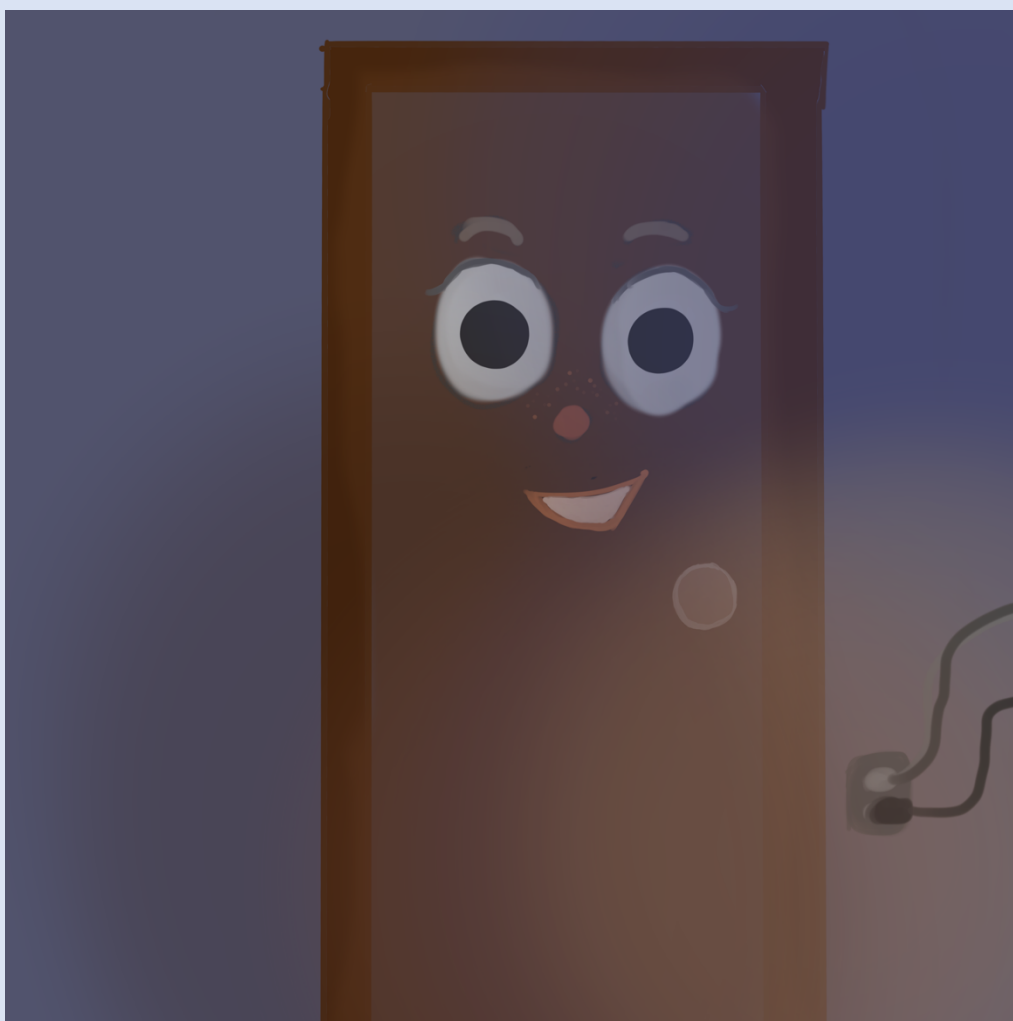
“My name is Klaus
and I keep the wind
out of your bedroom.

*When I notice there's a breeze,
the kind that makes you cough and sneeze,
I open my door extra wide
and push that blowy wind outside.
So that when you're tucked in bed,
there's no draft, around your head".*

"That's very nice of you
Klaus the Closet" said the little girl.
"I always wondered what happened
to the wind on a rainy night, and now I know
that you'll keep my room breeze-free".

"No worries little girl",
said Klaus the Closet.
It's my job to keep those breezes at bay,
no matter how hard the winds may play.

"Thank you Klaus", said the little girl while
turning back to the Pancake Monster to ask:
"And are there any other monsters I should
meet Mr. Pancake Monster?"



“Well, just a few”
replied the Pancake Monster.

Then the little girl heard the thunder pounding
and the rain coming down
oh so hard once again.

It was raining so hard that it made
her bedroom window rattle and shake,
and rattle and shake some more.

“Brrrrrrrr, I hope that it stays dry in here”,
said the little girl.

“Of course it will”, the window replied.
“My name is Willie the Window, and
my job is to keep your bedroom
dry and cozy.”

*Those raindrops can be such trouble.
They smack the windows on the double,
in the hope of finding cracks,
but I will stop them in their tracks.
Because it's my only job to try
to keep your bedroom nice and dry.*

“I am so happy to hear that,”
said the little girl.

“I can't sleep if I'm wet, and I don't
want all my dolls to get wet
from the rain either”, she added.

“Trust me”, said Willie the Window,
“I'll keep this room dry as a doorknob.
Your dolls are safe with me!”

“I’m so happy to hear that my dolls and I will stay dry and sleep well”, said the little girl.

“They sure will”, replied Willie, and back he went to rattling and shaking those raindrops right off of the little girl’s window.



Now, each time the little girl heard that rattling and shaking, she thought about how she and her little dolls were staying and nice and dry.

“Mr. Pancake Monster, may I ask you another question?”

“Of course you can”, the Pancake Monster replied.

“Sometimes at night,
I get scared of the dark.
What should I do then?”
the little girl asked.

With that, the night light
by the side of the little girl’s bed
blinked on and off,
on and off,
and then on and off
once again.

“That’s my job,” said the night light.
“My name is Nellie” and I’m here to
make sure that you don’t get
scared by the dark.

*“I listen to you all night long,
just to make sure that nothing’s wrong.
And if you stir and start to wake,
before another breath you take,
I will blink and turn myself on,
and then the darkness will be gone.”*

“It’s as simple as that.”
said Nellie the Night Light.

“So I don’t need to be afraid of the dark,”
said the little girl to Nellie the Night Light.

“Of course not”,
answered Nellie the Night Light.
“I’ll make sure that I’m all shiny and bright
anytime you wake up”.

“That is such a good feeling.
Thank you Nellie”, said the little girl.

Then the little girl looked around her room
and the little girl understood that
she wasn’t alone at all at night.



She had the Midnight Monsters
who were really special
and were really
good friends to have.

“Good night everyone,” the little girl called.
“Good night” rattled, banged, blinked, rolled
and shook the Midnight Monsters in return.

In no time, the room became quiet once again,
as the little girl fell deep asleep
and had sweet, sweet dreams.

