Conor pressed his pencil on the ghost-like paper and delicately moved it up and down – rhythmically and controlled. His wrist manoeuvred around the paper like a finely tuned machine creating a variety of shades of an image deep in his mind. This was the only thing that kept him sane. This was the only hobby that made him forget his troubles which was continuously hammering into his consciousness. This week was a particularly tough week. His mum, who was struggling with her new medicine, was feeling weaker than normal. She struggled with everyday jobs so Conor took up the responsibility for looking after her and the house. No job for a thirteen year old boy but he had no choice. Her illness was getting worse. He could see it in her face. Pained and sorrowful, her mum kept thinking positive thoughts but it was getting worse. However, he knew she would get better. She had to.

A Monster calls

The Monster showed up just after midnight. As they do.

Conor was awake when it came, still drawing.

Objects began rolling towards the large, Victorian bedroom window. Slowly at first, but others followed at a greater pace. Moonlight poured into the room through the large panes of glass and illuminated the moving objects. Action figures, a football, socks, and stationary were all gravitating towards the wall. Trying to get out. Sweat trickled down his temple and snaked its way down to his jaw where it dripped onto the brown, oak floor. His heart pounded. Nerves and fear spread through his veins with every heartbeat. He turned to the window. He froze.

It was like the nightmare from the previous night. The nightmare. Again. The one he’d been having a lot lately. The one with the darkness and the wind screaming. The ones with the hands slipping from his grasp, no matter how hard he tried to hold on. The one that always ended with…

Conor moved silently towards the window. When he peered through misty panes of glass, he saw a dark image appear from under the yew tree in the distance. Under its large canopy, dark, gnarled roots appeared from the grassy mound and reached towards the pitch-black sky. The tips of the roots formed itself into a fist and screams from the depth of hell echoed through the night sky. Faster and faster now, the huge, umber-brown trunk transformed into a muscular body with muscles proudly on show. The shrieks were getting louder. The banshee-like scream vibrated the foundations of the house. Conor stood still; his body shaking now. Bits of bark and twigs fell off and its enormous legs and feet ripped from the ground. Soil and grass spewed out of the ground like a volcano.

It was huge. Taller than most houses. Taking huge, monstrous steps, it knocked down everything in its path as it walked towards Conor. A lamp post, the fence and the shed were all destroyed as if they were mere toys. Every step left deep depressions into the ground and it moved quicker now. It had a purpose. A darkly red beam shot out of its eyes and were transfixed on Conor.

After several steps, a deep voice emitted from the depth of this monster’s lungs, ‘I have come to get you, Conor O’Malley.’

‘No! Go away! You will not take her away from me!’ Shouted Conor. His face pale white under the moonlight.

‘I have come to get you Conor O’Malley.’ Repeated The Monster.