

BROCCOLI MONSTER

Written by

Tara Clark

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INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

NATE "NATHANIEL", 11, the kind of kid who only has toys that come with lesson plans, sits at a small table with an encyclopedia in front of him.

NANCY, mid-30s, slaves away over a hot stove behind Nate.

Nancy piles two plates with meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and broccoli.

NANCY

Put the book away, Nate. Dinner is ready.

NATE

It's Nathaniel.

Nate sets his book aside as Nancy plops a plate down in front of him.

NATE

What is this, Nancy? Are you trying to poison me?

NANCY

It's mom. And I thought you liked meatloaf.

NATE

Not that, though I doubt it was cooked to the proper internal temperature. I meant the broccoli.

Nancy falls into a chair. Starts rubbing her temples.

NANCY

(exasperated)

You know, if you don't eat it, the broccoli monster could get you.

Nate pulls the encyclopedia to him.

NATE

Monster. An *imaginary* creature that is typically large, ugly, and frightening.

NANCY

Just eat what I give you for once.

NATE

I should just cook for myself.

NANCY

Great! Fine! Start tomorrow! Until
then you can go to your room!

Nancy called his bluff. Nate leaves the table. Unsure.

On his way out of the kitchen he glances back to see Nancy
with her head on the table. He didn't mean to upset her.

INT. NATE'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

A boy's bedroom filled to the gills with educational toys,
butterfly collections, models of human muscle structure, etc.

Nate reads from an encyclopedia. A dark shadow starts to
creep up the wall across from Nate's bed. He looks. Nothing
is there.

NATE

Nancy?

Nate puts aside the book. Climbs out of bed. Heads out the
door.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Nate cracks a door to peep in at Nancy asleep. Gentle snores
drift from her bed.

Nate shuts the door. He looks back towards his own room.
Gulps.

INT. NATE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nate shuts the door to his room. Glances around. Seems fine.

He walks to his bed and pulls back the cover. Something is in
the sheets. He reaches for a flashlight on his night stand.
It is a piece of broccoli. How did that get there?

Nate goes to throw the broccoli in the trash. A shadow
streaks behind him. His breath catches for a moment. He
shines the light around the room. Nothing.

Nate is unnerved. He moves back to the bed. He is probably
just seeing things. He starts to put the flashlight away.
Hesitates.

INT. NATE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Nate clings to the flashlight. Sheets pulled up to his chin. He is visibly shaking.

Then, Nate hears a scratching sound from under his bed. Before he has time to think the entire bed shakes for just a moment.

NATE
(with a quiver)
Nancy? Come on, stop it.

As if answering, the bed shakes again. A low growl and a shadow start to creep out from under the bed. The shadow climbs up his bedroom door and the growling gets louder.

Nate jumps from his bed and scampers into the closet. Slams the door behind him.

INT. NATE'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Nate hides in the corner. He can hear growling and shuffling in his room. After a few moments it stops. Is it gone?

INT. NATE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nate peeks out of his closet. He is greeted by a terrible sight. Everything in his room, the butterflies, the human muscle model, everything has been replaced with broccoli! Impossible!

Nate can barely breath.

From the dark of the closet the growling starts again. A slimy, scaly, broccoli covered hand starts to reach for Nate. The hand just touches his shoulder.

NATE
Mom! Mom! Mom!

Nate explodes from the closet! He races out of his room.

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nate bursts through the door in blind terror.

NATE
Mom! Mom!

Nancy sits up in bed. Groggy. She reaches out to Nate to try and calm him.

NANCY
What is it, baby? What's wrong?

NATE
(windy)
Will you make me some broccoli?

Nancy glances at the clock. It reads 2:38AM.

NANCY
Do you know what time it is? Go
back to bed.

NATE
No! Can we have some now?

Nate looks like he might cry.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Nate is scarfing down his broccoli like it was candy. Nancy gawks. He stands once his plate is finished.

NATE
Thanks, mom.

He takes his plate to the sink. Starts to leave the kitchen. Turns.

NATE
Do you think you could tuck me in?

Nancy is stunned.

NANCY
Sure, I'll be there in a minute.

Nate smiles and leaves. Nancy soaks in the moment.

She takes her own plate of untouched broccoli to the trash can, throws it away, follows Nate out of the kitchen.

INT. NATE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Nancy is smoothing the covers over Nate's bed. She finally gets to be a mom.

Everything is back to normal in Nate's room. Not a single broccoli flower in sight.

NATE

You know, in some cultures the mother-son bond is the most important relationship either will ever have.

NANCY

Really?

NATE

Yea. I read about it.

NANCY

Well, good night, Nathaniel.

NATE

Nate.

Nancy smiles.

INT. NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nancy is lying in bed, sleeping peacefully. Behind her a dark shadow looms.

Nancy's eyes open just as a broccoli covered hand reaches out and touches her shoulder. She sits bolt upright.

SCREAM TO BLACK