

## **I Hear a Whisper**

By Ella Carmichael

I wake up in the morning with my head pounding. It's hard enough to get to school in the first place but to sit through music class is even worse. The pounding gets stronger, so I quickly decide to leave and go for a short walk. I raise my hand and say "May I please be dismissed." Mrs. Haberdasher responds with "You have five minutes." Then she flips the sand timer.

As I am walking the headache begins to fade, instead I hear a whispering in my ear. I suddenly freeze and think: what is that noise? I am bewildered and just as startled. The whisper in my head says: "Why so surprised?" I frantically began to run down the hall, hoping the whisper was just a figment of my imagination. No such luck! The whisper emerged out of my ear and formed a shadow right before me. I begin to run, then my pace turns to a sprint as the whisper speaks again: "You can run but you can't hide. I am the only one who can!" I return to class looking all disheveled with only a minute to spare. As I return, I realize the whisper is right! Except all the shadows begin to whisper instead. I'm terrified and no one understands.

My anxiety can't be hidden and Mrs. Haberdasher calls the office to send me home. I am told by my friend that: "You're probably just stressed, Maple, remember you loathe music class." Then I am ushered to the office and they call home saying: "She seems stressed and worried, she is acting weird and she is running a high fever, we think she needs to get picked up." Understandably my mom comes to pick me up. Although, even she seemed a pinch out of whack. She seemed confused on where to

go, and as for me I felt lightheaded. The weird thing was I felt lighter, as though the whisper had left me...

Thump! It felt as though something had pounced onto me. I tried to scream but only air came out. The positive is that mom seems back to normal as she says: "You need to stop squirming Maple, it is probably just sleep paralysis." As I sit there quietly the whisper enters my head to tell me: "If you think for one second that I am not listening to your thoughts, you are wrong! I may have inhabited your mom's thoughts temporarily, but once I have been in a child's brain I can always listen to their thoughts. Just so you know you will never escape." The second the whisper was silenced almost all the weight was lifted.

I had no time to think. I quickly blurted out: "Mom that was not sleep paralysis! It was like a demon, I call it the whisper. It is in my head and it went into yours." Mom seems incredibly calm for someone in her situation and she comes up with a fair response: "We can go to a medium and they should be able to help you." She quickly turned the car around and headed straight towards a place I didn't even realize existed.

As we slipped inside, a small bell chimed and a short woman with light brown hair slipped out of the shadows. Before I could say anything she held a finger to my lips and muttered: "I sense it! I have only heard of this, but never experienced it. It must be a whisper-demon! These are so rare most people have never heard of them. Good thing you came here, as I will be able to help you. You must be in incredible pain. Here is an amulet and let me go get you a drink to help you with the pain." I casually slip on the amulet and sit down as she returns to tell me more. "Here is a cayenne pepper lemonade. Cayenne pepper is known to ward off evil spirits as well as salt, so make

sure to eat lots of salt,” the medium tells me. I was given simple instructions to follow for the next seven years:

1. Do not remove the necklace until you are officially 18 years of age.
2. One meal a day that must contain salt.
3. If your head ever hurts, drink cayenne pepper lemonade.
4. If you hear a whisper in your head you must come straight here.

The rules seemed simple enough and I followed them religiously for the next seven years until my birthday. Now that is another story so listen carefully.

The day after my 18th birthday I removed my amulet ready to finally be free of it. The second the necklace dropped to the floor it shattered and a demon emerged. The whisper-demon slithered into my ear and flooded my thoughts. I followed rule 4 precisely but the medium’s store was closed. The sign read: closed indefinitely. Of course she remained open until my 18th birthday thinking I would no longer need her assistance. Apparently I did. Then I had a flashback of what the whisper-demon had said: “I never leave a child’s mind.”

I sought the guidance of my mom, who suggested we get the amulet repaired. With the amulet repaired I was able to trap the demon once again. The amulet sadly had a missing piece letting the demon enter my head for 1 hour every day but it had to fight for that hour so there were days without it. Finally, I thought my problems were over. Well I was wrong again!

20 years later I was faced with yet another challenge. My daughter was now eight years old and she asked: “Mommy, why do you always wear your necklace?” My daughter had realized and I didn’t know what to tell her. What could I tell her? Then the

whisper slipped into my head: “Tell her, tell her, she needs to know. If you don't, my child will tell her.....in a whisper.”