



NO PLACE FOR MONSTERS

Written and Illustrated by
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Chicken
House

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*To my mother, Patti Pedersen Merritt, former public school
teacher, who read me many books and filled my
childhood with wonderful memories.*

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Sunset.

The sky dims from pink to purple.

Feel the chill of the night breeze.

Hear the whisper of dry grass,
the skitter of leaves down
empty sidewalks.

The shadows creep closer.

Once we feared those shadows.

Remember ?

You've heard the stories.

Stories of Monsters.

Bogeys and boggarts and bugbears,
waiting to spring from the darkness.

Ah, but that was long ago,

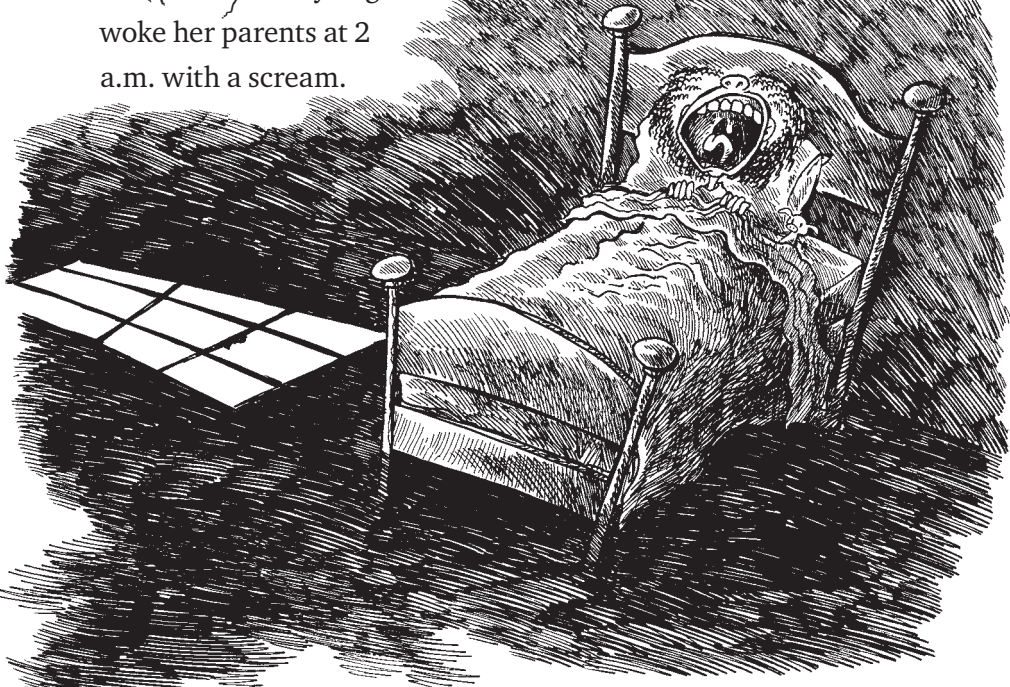
back when the woods were still wild
and the shadows untamed.

We are safe now.

There is no
place for
monsters
in
suburbia.

Chapter 1: Cindy Who?

On Monday Cindy Fogle
woke her parents at 2
a.m. with a scream.



Mr and Mrs Fogle found Cindy sitting bolt upright
in her bed, eyes wide and skin clammy. *Night terrors*,
figured Mrs Fogle. Cindy slept with her parents the rest
of the night.

On Tuesday Cindy woke at 1:45 a.m. She was hysterical when her parents arrived to calm her.



She spent another restless night in her parents' room, babbling about *the Really Tall Man*.

On Wednesday Cindy's screams started shortly after midnight. She begged to spend the night in her parents' room again.

Her room was bad.

The closet was bad.

The curtains were bad.

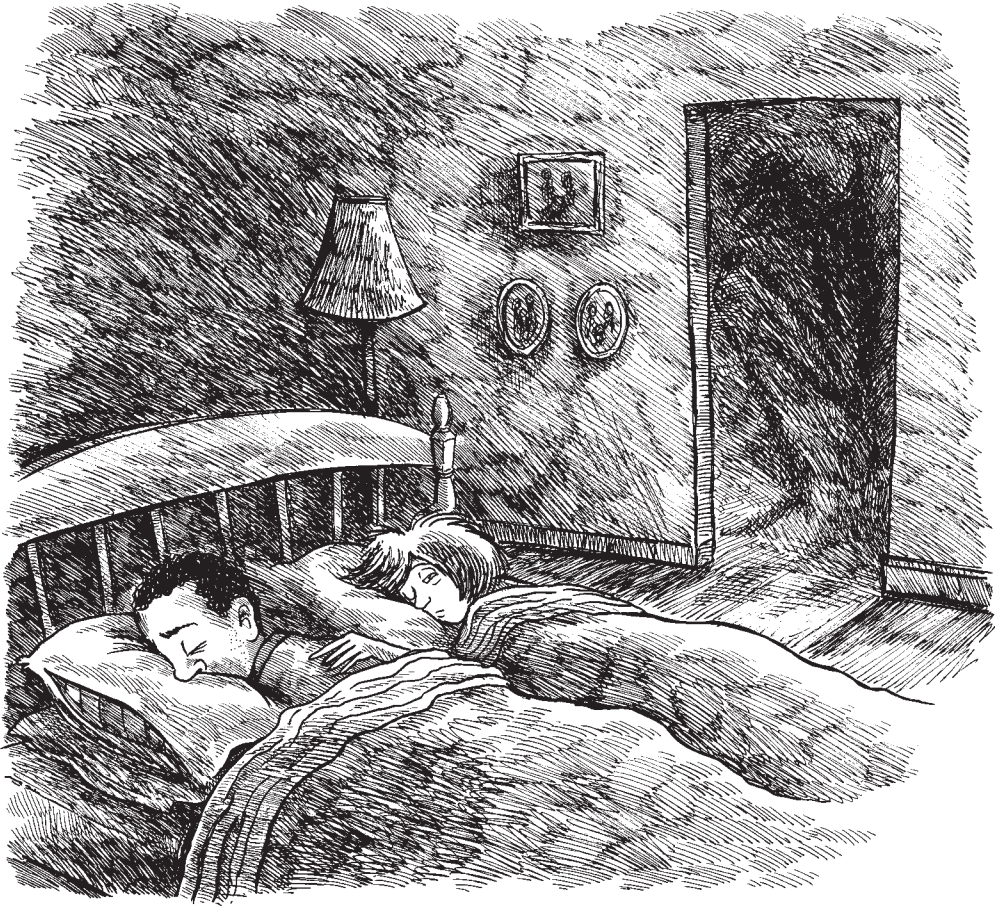


Under the bed – bad, bad, bad.

Mr Fogle even checked under the bed. See? No monsters. No “Really Tall Man”. Just a plush rabbit that Mr Fogle didn’t remember buying.

At last her parents relented, and while Cindy snuggled between them, Mr Fogle silently vowed this would be the final time his daughter slept in their bed.

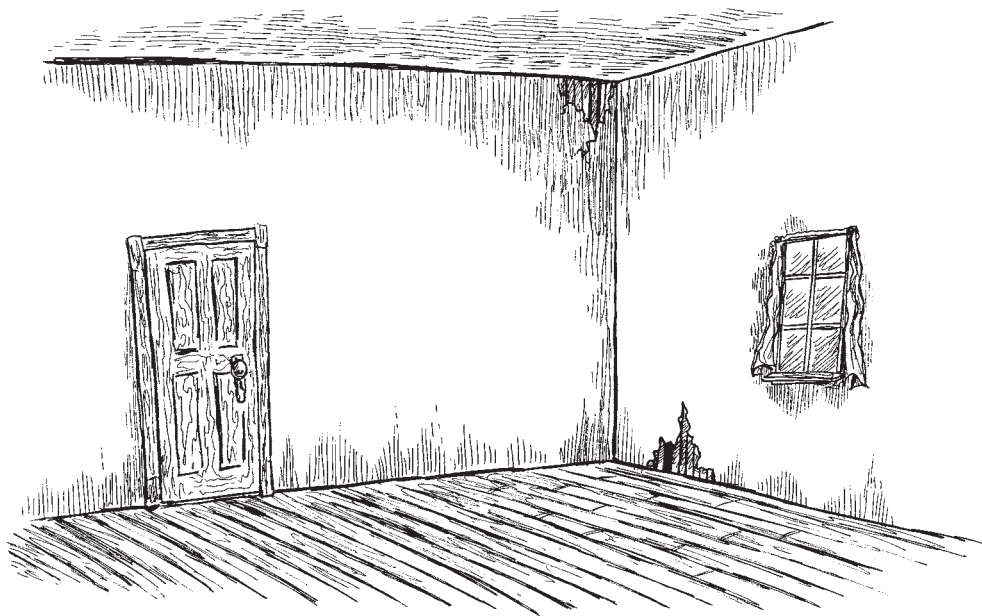
On Thursday Mrs Fogle was roused in the middle of the night by a faint shuffling noise. She held her breath and listened.



Silence.

Probably just the fridge or the water heater or one of many strange house noises she noticed only at night. She fell back into sleep.

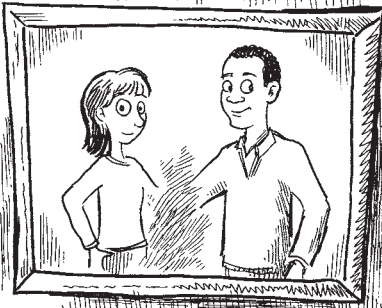
In the morning Mr and Mrs Fogle woke and went about their business. They did not notice that Cindy was gone.



Her room was empty. The speckled wallpaper, the pony border, the Tinker Bell bed sheets, the toy chest, the clothes that should have been hanging in the closet: *gone*.

No, not gone. More like *never there to begin with*. It was just a spare room Mr Fogle had been planning to fill with a pool table.

And the family portrait hanging in the hall? Oh, that was there. It showed Mr and Mrs Fogle holding hands and smiling. No Cindy between them. Why should there be a Cindy? The Fogles did not have a daughter.



And the school didn't call when Cindy failed to show. Why should they? There was no Cindy Fogle in their records.

Cindy?

Cindy who?