

THE NIGHT THE MOON WENT OUT



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BLOOMSBURY

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CHAPTER 1

Aneira had a big problem.

Her bedtime had started out like it always did, reading with her mum...

“What was that word again, Mum?”

“The new word we learnt from the book?”

Aneira had nodded.

“It was ‘nocturnal’, darling,” Mum had said.

“I like the sound of it. It is like knocking on a door and doing a turn afterwards! Knock – turn – al,” Aneira had giggled.

“Do you remember what it means?”

“It doesn’t mean knocking or turning. It means doing things at night,” Aneira had remembered.

“Yes, well done,” her mum smiled. “Some animals are nocturnal and wake up and move around at night when we are asleep.”

“I wouldn’t like to be nocturnal, I like the daytime,” said Aneira firmly.

“Well that reminds me, as you don’t want to be nocturnal, I think it’s bedtime,” her mum had said.

Aneira was already in bed. She was wrapped in her softest, comfiest pyjamas, the blue ones with clouds on them. She’d had a hot chocolate and she was feeling all snuggly. Outside the streets were quiet, the sun had turned in for the day and Aneira could see the dark creeping underneath her bedroom curtains.

“Mum, don’t forget about my light,” called Aneira.



Mum carefully reached over to the light switch. Aneira looked up to see the familiar shapes on the ceiling that shone from her night light but they didn't appear.

Mum shook her head as she tried the switch a few times but it wasn't working.

This was a big problem. It was a huge problem actually.

You see, Aneira was afraid of the dark.

She wouldn't ever tell her friends at school that she was afraid of the dark; she didn't want them to laugh at her. When they had sleepovers she always made sure she slept by the door and left the corridor light on so no one noticed. The truth was, she was really very very terrifyingly scared of the dark.

When it was dark, Aneira imagined she could hear monsters growling under her bed and ghosts going "ooooohhhh" in the corners of her room. She couldn't actually hear those things because she had hearing

loss and so in the daytime she wore hearing aids, which curled around each of her ears. They had sparkly red moulds that sat inside her ears and shiny red cases that sat behind her ears. She liked them because they were colourful and could be controlled on her mum's smartphone. It was useful to be able to turn them down when everything got a bit loud.

Each night Aneira had to take her red hearing aids out and put them in a special box to charge them, just like her mum did with her tablet. She wore her hearing aids all day from as soon as she got up to just before she went to sleep. Sometimes she thought she might just wear them in her sleep too but then they wouldn't charge, plus they were a bit uncomfortable if you slept at funny angles. Aneira liked sleeping at funny angles, it made sleeping more fun.

Not being able to hear everything made the dark even scarier. Aneira worried that

there were terrible warnings she couldn't hear. She imagined long ghostly fingers trying to pinch her whilst she slept and monsters trying to eat her toes. No, she could absolutely not sleep without a light.

"I want my night light," she said firmly to her mum.

Her voice sounded far away without her hearing aids on. It was as if all the sounds had run away from her, like the kids did at school when she'd first got her hearing aids.

"There's always a light in the dark sweetheart" said Mum, "just look out of your window and there's a night light there for everyone."

Mum pulled open the curtains. Aneira looked up and out of her window into the darkness. She saw a big round light shining right there in the sky.

Aneira frowned.

“I don’t want the Moon, I want my night light!”

“I promise you’ll be fine. Now try and get some sleep, I’ll be right down the stairs if you need me,” said her mum as she closed Aneira’s bedroom door.

Aneira lay still in the darkness in her room. She’d never seen it so dark. There were shadows stretching across the ceiling and she started imagining all the noises they could be making. She tried squeezing her eyes shut but that didn’t help either. She opened one eye and looked at the Moon out of her window. The Moon didn’t light up her room like her night light did. The Moon didn’t create pretty shapes on her ceiling to cover up all the strange shadows that seemed to creep towards her. The Moon wasn’t able to comfort her by being right next to her head just like her night light was, it was too far away from where she lay in her bed. She didn’t want the Moon, she wanted

her night light in her room, just where it always was.



“I don’t want the rubbish Moon,” she said out loud to herself. “I want my night light.”

Then just like that, the Moon went out.