

## The Very Scary Nightmare

August 3rd

Last Saturday, our family sat around the table eating grilled cheese and tomato soup for lunch, but Ty was missing.

My mom called for him. He came downstairs with his usual spiky hair and pajamas, but his eyes were a bit red as if he'd been crying. We asked him what was wrong, but he clearly did not want to tell us.

My dad decided to bring up the trip to New York City that my mom would be taking Ruby and me on in two weeks, "Are you girls excited to see everything?"

Ruby nodded energetically, and I said of course we were! Grant took a bite of his sandwich and, with a full mouth, told us the only thing he remembered about visiting NYC was all the rats.

"Rats?" Ruby and I asked with concern.

"Oh yes," Said Grant, taking another bite, "The subways are full of them..."

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Later that night, Ruby woke up screaming! My parents rushed to the twins' room, and I followed. We flicked on the lights and found Ruby totally distraught. Ty remained under his covers.

Ruby shook with tears, "I h-h-had a horrible dream about r-r-RATS! And when I woke up, I thought I s-s-saw one!"

"Aww, Ruby," My tired mom said, sitting beside her and stroking her hair (which looked like a great big fuzz ball), "It's okay. You don't need to worry."

My dad was quite practical: "Well, let's see here," he said, looking around the room, "I don't see any rats."

He even lifted up a few items to show how rat-less the room was. "See, Ruby, no rats here. Why don't you try going back to bed? Why don't we all go back to bed."

And we did. I fell right to sleep, but that didn't last long. In the middle of the night, a small hand poked my arm, and a little voice whispered: "Wake up, wake up."

It was completely dark, but I knew that voice anywhere.

"What's the matter, Ruby?" I asked.

She said she was still very scared and wanted to sleep in my bed with me. Before I could answer, she crawled in—and though Ruby is small, she manages to take up a lot of space by stretching out her arms and legs like a starfish wearing red pajamas.

The last thing I remember saying was, “Everything will be fine,” before we drifted off to sleep...

Suddenly, I was transported. I felt sure I was alone in a very dark tunnel underground somewhere. A screeching sound and two bright lights came from a distance.

The biggest silver train I’d ever seen barreled towards me, pushing hot air out of its way, engines steaming, horn screaming. It stopped inches in front of my face, the doors opened, and out crawled hundreds and hundreds of rats! There was nowhere to run, and the tunnel began shrinking. I felt filled with fear and dread, like the time I’d lost Morris.

Some rats climbed the walls; others noticed me and ran my way. They crawled towards my feet. I started to spin; this way, the rats couldn’t get me.

It worked. They flung off in all directions as they tried to climb my dress. Except one! It had red eyes and sharp teeth and clung no matter how fast I spun. It chewed through my shoes and nipped at my toes!

Then I awoke. My heart was pounding; I tried to catch my breath. Ruby turned on the light, and I couldn’t believe my eyes.

“R-R-R-RAT!” I screamed!

Ruby and I ran to the far side of my room and grabbed an umbrella in case we had to defend ourselves.

My parents, Grant, and Ty all burst through the door in no time. They saw Ruby and me cowering in fear and a rat-sized lump moving beneath the blanket.

Ty walked right up to the bed, reached under the blanket, and exclaimed, “Zoom Zoom! I’ve been looking all over for you! I thought I lost you!” And proudly scooped up his missing chubby little guinea pig.

*“Why do these things always happen to me?”* I wondered.

Your Friend,  
Joanie