



### Waking Up in a Nightmare

She felt dizzy and confused. She looked around her, but everything was dark and she couldn't figure out where she was or why she was there. She heard groaning just a few feet away, but couldn't make out whom the groans belonged to or why the person was groaning. The air seemed thick and hard to breathe, and a deep inhalation scratched the back of her throat raw and made her cough. She was starting to get frightened, but she tried to fight it off. Perhaps if she just laid her head back down and went to sleep, she might ...

“Ouch!” As she laid her head back, she rested it against something sharp that dug into her scalp. That woke her up a little more. Images started to enter her mind, images that she wanted to forget. A recollection of waking up suddenly to the whole room shaking around her; pictures throwing themselves off the walls and the furniture crashing and banging as it tumbled over. Her favorite doll thrown from the shelf and crushed by the crib that was launched across the room like an arrow from a bow. She remembered looking at her sister sitting bolt upright in the next bed, her face frozen in shock, but neither of them could speak because their throats were closed shut in fear. Then there was a shrill creaking sound, so sharp and penetrating that it was almost like a scream as the walls and ceiling fell in on them. That was the last thing she remembered before waking up here in this nightmare.