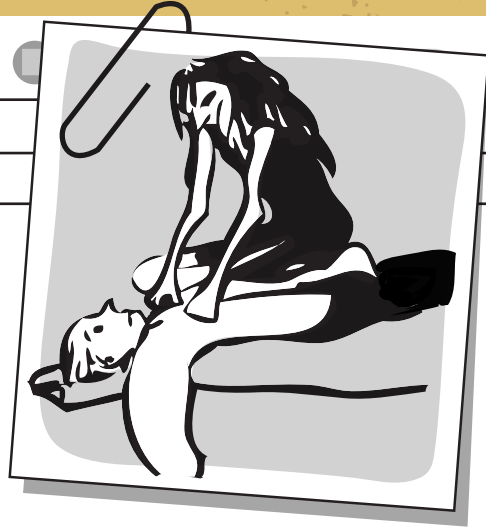


CASE: Old Hag Syndrome

LOCATION: Worldwide

Sleep paralysis, or "old hag syndrome", is a worldwide phenomenon with a scientific explanation. During sleep paralysis, a person, either when falling asleep or awakening, suddenly cannot move. It is a transitional state between wakefulness and sleep characterized by complete muscle weakness. It is often associated with terrifying visions, such as an intruder in the room, to which one is unable to react due to paralysis. This phenomenon has been documented for decades. Many cultures in the past believed it was caused by a malevolent being, such as a small troll or a witch.



WITNESS: Melinda Harte, sleep paralysis sufferer:

For several nights in a row now I've woken up in the middle of the night with someone sitting on my chest. I would suddenly wake up with a crushing weight on top of me. I could barely breathe. I couldn't move or scream or do anything. It's like I had no control of my body at all. Sometimes, I think I see the glowing eyes of the thing sitting on my chest. Other times, it's completely invisible but it feels very cold. I would pass out from not being able to breathe and when I wake up again in the morning, everything seems normal.

Digging through old case files, you also find this report from 1832...

What hath these demons wrought? For weeks now I have woken with a start in the middle of the night. Some say it is the work of a wraith or ghoul; others have a purely scientific explanation. I know not which to believe...

Why do you think people in older times believed this was caused by a demon or witch?

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What do you think Melinda would say if she saw the report from 1832?

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