

IN MY HEAD

By NESOCHIM IHEANYI-IGWE
THE GULF INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE ACADEMY, AL AIN, UAE
2016 Division B 3rd Place Writing Award

“Lizzie .. !”

I looked around, confused by the voice i had just heard. I always slept through the night but now find myself waking up more in the middle of the night, most times, screaming. Each of my nightmares told of the next ghost that would visit. I felt helpless.

Tonight, it was *‘Nana’ my late grandmother*. Her smile was almost totally concealed by the wrinkles that had overtaken her face. I watched as her shadow turned a bright blue and heard her whisper *“watch out darling, we’re coming”*.

As i screamed, *Terra* tapped my shoulder to wake me. She is my roommate, and my best friend. Seeing me breathe heavily, she laughed and asked *“what type of dream was it?, .. seemed kind of scary.”* For a moment I deliberated whether to tell her or not.

“It’s better to tell her now” a voice whispered from the corner of our dorm room. It was my late mother. I closed my eyes, and tried to make her disappear.

Terra listened as i told her about the dreams. As soon as i was done talking, she burst out laughing, and said *“that-was-great!”*, each word punctuated by a laugh. Terra is a good friend, but sometimes she doesn't believe me. I told her i was scared.

At my morning lectures, I keep reliving the dreams. I can hear the professor’s voice in a distance but it is muffled by my grandmother voice repeating *“we’re coming, .. we’re coming”*. I heard some laughter and looked to find my mother staring back at me. I let out a sudden scream which brought the lecture hall to silence, and everyone staring at

me. Embarrassed, I politely excused myself and ran out the door, into the campus quad, looking for somewhere to hide. *My mother ran after me.*

Sitting next to me on an empty bench, neither of us spoke for a few moments. Then she said "*that was a little embarrassing, don't you think?*". I turned to look at the stranger she had become. She now had cold, hard, icy blue eyes. Her eyes had always been brown. I couldn't take it anymore, so I got up and ran; trying to get as far away from her as possible.

Most days are like this. They would show up during lectures, at my finals; talking throughout the test and commenting on my answers, at the park, in the car, at lunch, *everywhere*. They are ruthless and I can't concentrate. They were always people i'd known from my past. An uncle, an aunt, even Terra's grandmother showed up once.

Every night i go to sleep thinking, "*is this the night they will go away?... will it all stop tonight?*"

I have a plan. Tomorrow, I'm going to get rid of these ghosts, once and for all.

(See illustration below)



Title: *In my Head*