

# Sleep Paralysis or Hag Phenomena

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This article addresses my experience with sleep paralysis.



Published on  
**Booksie**

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## Sleep Paralysis or Hag Phenomena

Have you ever had a night terror? They differ from your run of the mill nightmare; vivid and extremely scary! I have experienced it three times now and I can understand why some people feel they have had a paranormal experience.

These episodes happen in sleep, but the sleeper feels they are very much awake. They occur usually just as the person is falling asleep, or just as they are waking up; lasting only seconds. They are the most vivid and frightening dreams I have ever had; and I have had some strange nightmares in my life.

The following experience documents one of my own night terrors in an attempt to perhaps help someone who feels they have a spirit and/or spirits haunting them. I believe that the reports of hauntings that occur, after someone has gone to bed, is due to these vivid dreams.

My first one occurred at night; although any time you lay down to sleep these unusual dreams can occur.

I was asleep and I felt someone sit down on my bed. I could feel the bed move under the weight of whoever had sat down. I felt the covers on the bed lift up, and then back down again. Then, I felt a hand brush against my face and a low hiss into my ear! I could see my bedroom with the street light shining through my window; but I could not move; not one muscle.

I was on my side, which didn't face the side where someone sat down. I tried to turn over and see who was in the bed with me; but it was as if something held me down. At that point I was frantic. The hissing stopped and I began to notice dark forms, or shadow people, as some people call them. They were surrounding my bed. I was petrified! These shadows or spirits seemed to be whispering, but I couldn't understand what they were saying. I had the sense they were talking to me, but I couldn't get a sound to come from my mouth. I tried screaming to my husband who was still awake and watching television downstairs, but I couldn't make myself heard.

I was certain I was fully awake. I could see the chest of drawers and the night table beside the bed. I saw the lamp, the clock; and I could see the dim light in the hallway from downstairs. How could I NOT be awake?

After what seemed like an hour; I finally woke myself up making a loud blood curdling noise in my attempt to call my husband upstairs. In reality I had only been asleep for a few minutes. It was then I realized I had not truly been awake. I've since learned this type of experience isn't that uncommon. It is called *sleep paralysis*, which makes the dreamer feel pinned to the bed; or unable to move.

Although many people experience the paralysis portion of the phenomena; not all have the vivid visual or paranormal quality to the dream. They may think someone is in the room that they know, and they try to open their eyes and let the person know they are awake. They may hear them talking and try as they may; they cannot open their eyes or sit up to speak to them. When they do wake up; it is hard for them to determine if they dreamed the experience, or if it really happened.

I have had that dream many times; and although it is frustrating not to be able to open my eyes or move, they are not as frightening as the night terrors.

Research has been done on this phenomena and it does show a correlation to disrupted sleep patterns or people who suffer from anxiety disorders. I do suffer from panic attacks and take medication for it. I also keep strange hours and do not go to bed on a schedule; so I'm doubly prone to them I suppose. I am known for

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staying up all night and then taking one of two power naps during the day.

Although I have never experienced an episode where I feel as if there is something heavy on my chest; and feeling impending death or suffocation; there is a term for it. It is called *Hag Phenomena*. This too is a very frightening thing to happen to an individual.

Sleep paralysis and Hag Phenomena are not dangerous and do not pose a health threat; they are simply the mind at work, between the seconds of conscious and unconscious state, of the person experiencing it.

I am a paranormal buff, so perhaps my frightening dreams, during this state, comes from my interest in the subject. Watching a TV show about the paranormal, and then going to sleep probably isn't a wise thing for me to do if I want to avoid the bad dreams. (But, I find myself doing it anyway.)

It is easy to see why some people feel they have ghosts or spirits attacking them during sleep if they suffer from these dreams often enough. Although researchers did not address this subject; I think the power of suggestion plays a part in both phenomena's happening.

If one tends to engage the idea of life after death, or earthbound spirits; it isn't such a leap to think something other than a bad dream is going on when the event occurs to them. Once one has occurred, the dreamer may convince themselves it is coming from some supernatural source.

While it may sound funny to those who never had such a dream; it is not humorous to those who have suffered through them. They feel extremely real when you are in the middle of having them and can linger on the mind for day afterwards.

I suppose this is a different kind of thing to write for the booksie site; but I'll put it under the Non-Fiction section and see if anyone else out there has had a similar experience as well.

I'll end this by stating that although I am interested in the paranormal; I am a skeptic. Until proven, I do not feel ghosts exist, (except in my fictional paranormal writings of course.)

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