

The Midnight Ledger of Oakhaven

Kailey Leppen



The town of Oakhaven stands quiet and shrouded in shadow under the pale moonlight, its empty streets echoing with an eerie silence. Every storefront along Main Street is dark and dusty, bearing witness to the mysterious disappearances that have plagued the town for years. Residents keep their front doors bolted tightly before sunset, living in constant fear of the midnight hour.



Inside her dimly lit bedroom, thirteen-year-old Kailey Leppen sits nervously on her bed with her heavy desk chair wedged firmly under the doorknob. Her glowing red alarm clock ticks slowly toward midnight while she prepares for the long night ahead. The air in the room feels heavy and suffocating as the tension mounts.



At 11:15 PM, Kailey's phone lights up with a video call from her terrified best friend, Maya. Maya is huddled in the corner of her room wrapped tightly in a thick quilt, her eyes wide and bloodshot from lack of sleep. She begs Kailey to stay on the screen with her, believing that watching each other will keep the unknown threat at bay.



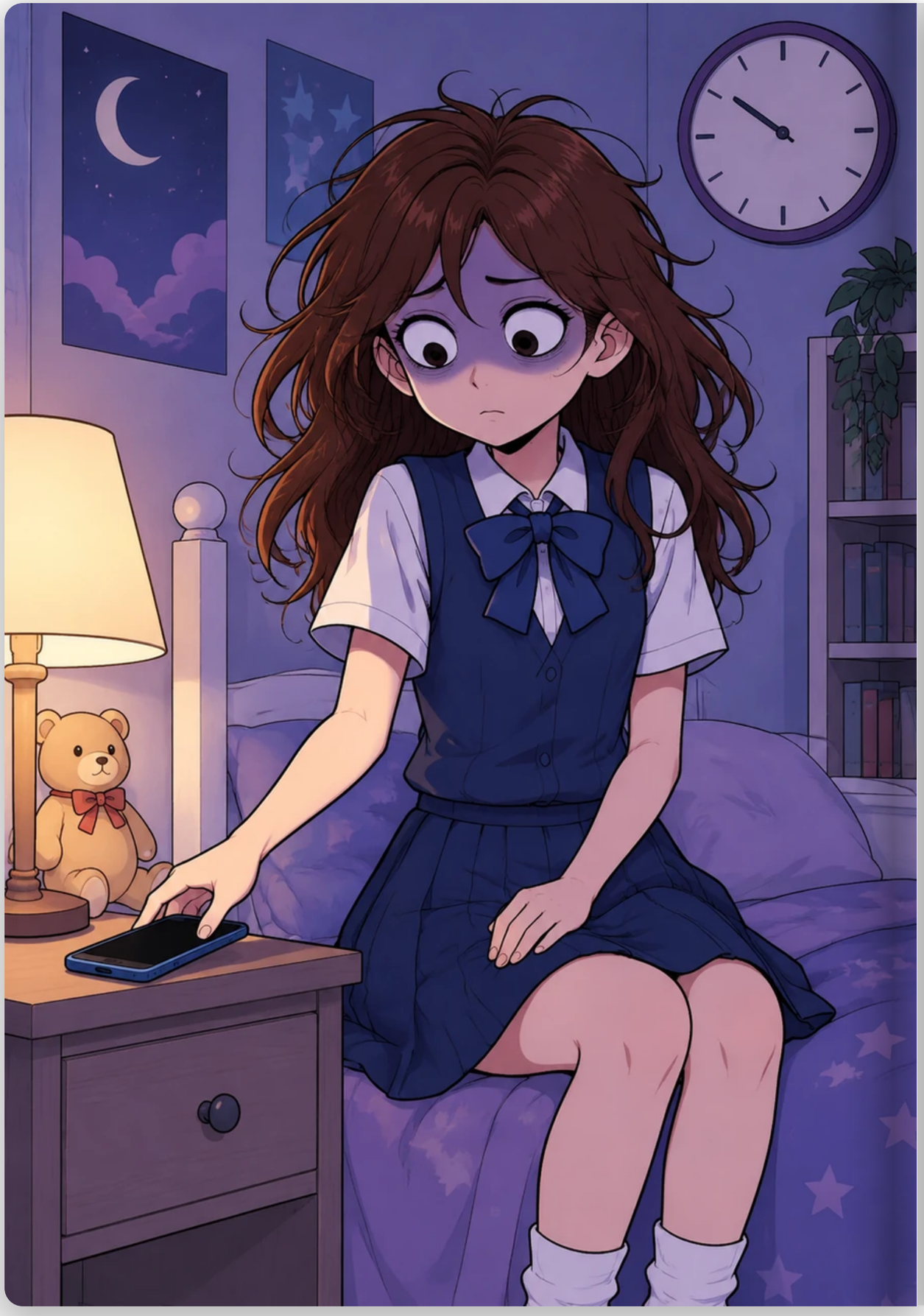
The two friends whisper to each other in hushed tones, trying desperately to distract themselves from the creeping silence outside. Every creak of the old house makes Maya flinch violently, while Kailey maintains a steady, reassuring expression on camera. The glowing clock digits edge closer and closer to midnight: 11:48, 11:52, 11:56.



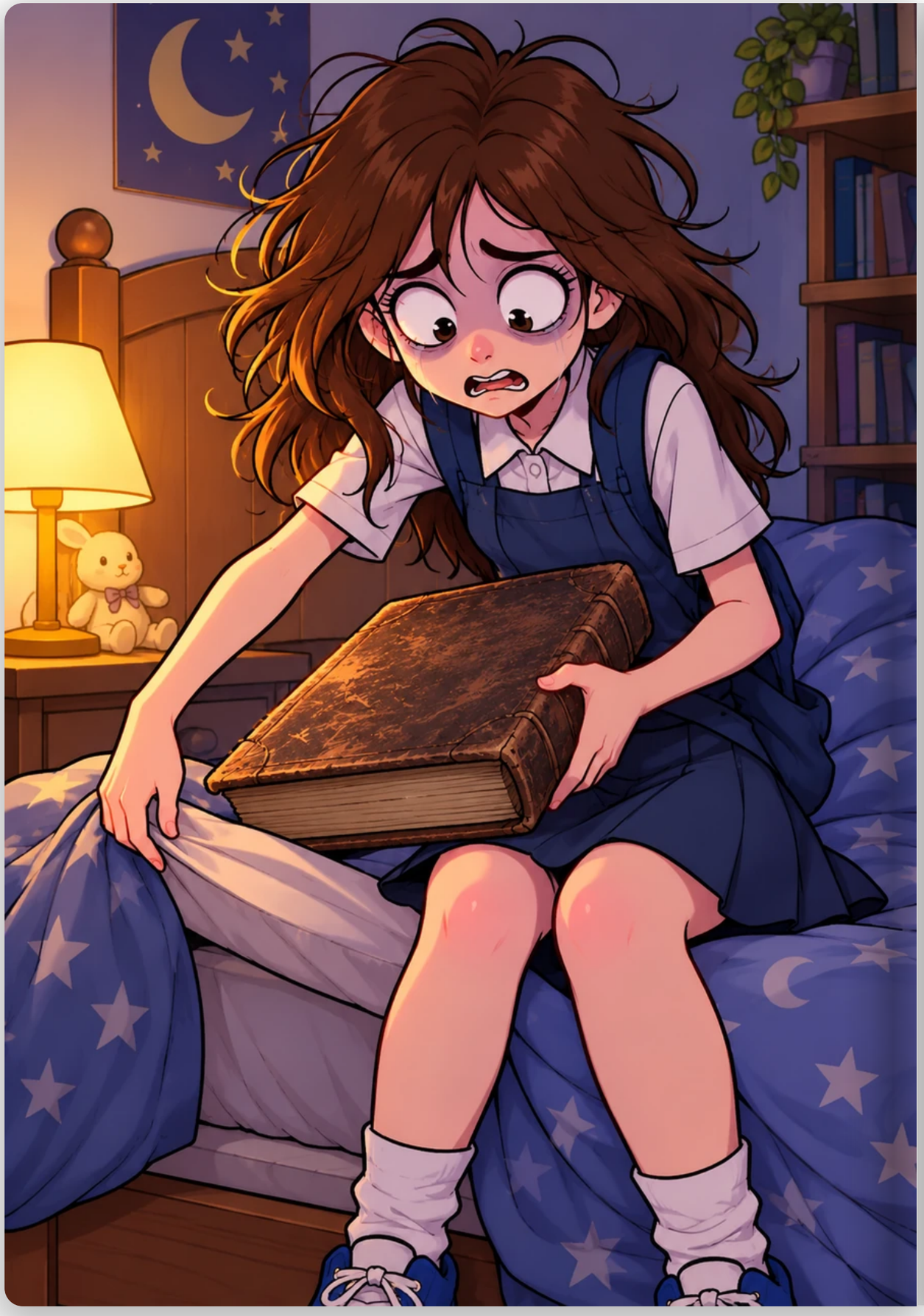
Suddenly, Maya freezes mid-sentence and her eyes drift slowly away from the phone screen toward her closed bedroom door. The color drains completely from her face as she whispers that she hears heavy footsteps in the hallway. Paralyzed by pure terror, she watches helplessly as the brass doorknob begins to turn.



The digital clock clicks precisely to 12:00 AM, and Maya's bedroom door swings wide open into pitch blackness. A sharp, strangled gasp escapes her lips just before the video call violently glitches with jagged static. The screen abruptly turns completely black, displaying a chilling call failed message.



For a long, suffocating minute, the only sound in Kailey's room is the rhythmic ticking of the wall clock. The terrified expression on Kailey's face slowly melts away, replaced by an unsettlingly cold and completely blank stare. She sets her phone down on the nightstand with deliberate slowness.



Reaching deep beneath her mattress, Kailey pulls out an old, leather-bound ledger that has been passed down through generations of her family. The worn leather cover bears the marks of time, holding dark secrets known only to a select few in Oakhaven. She carefully places the heavy book on her lap under the glow of the bedside lamp.



Kailey opens the ancient ledger to a page filled with handwritten names, dates, and careful tallies stretching back decades. She picks up a pen with steady fingers, ready to document the latest entry for the town's grim tradition. The flickering light casts long, dancing shadows across the mysterious names written inside.



As the clock ticks past midnight, Kailey looks up from the open ledger with a calm, knowing expression that hides the town's darkest secret. The quiet house settles back into stillness, leaving her alone with the heavy burden of her family's legacy. Oakhaven sleeps on, completely unaware of the truth resting in her hands.