My fear is all around me. I see it everywhere, in every corner, in the most unexpected places. To most people the adorable cloth sack, the animal made of stuffing holds no menace, but when I look at it chills run down my spine.

My little brother allows them to sit with all his other toys. My mother even keeps one on display in our living room. But I am well aware that they could be hiding in my dark closet or waiting under my comfortable bed. They might be hanging from the ceiling in net hammocks or sleeping in baskets of unfolded laundry.

All I know is that even though my fear is completely irrational, it is all too real. Waves of panic wash over me whenever I look into its lifeless eyes. The cold, black, button eyes of a sock monkey – nothing can compare. Yes, I am afraid of, it almost pains me to say it, sock monkeys.

And even though this is one of many fears that keep me up at night it is definitely the worst. Unfortunately, my family members think it is hilarious to mock my fear of the 'cute' sock creatures. So, when they see an opportunity to chase me with one, they seize it. They have also taken to buying me sock monkeys as 'generous' Christmas and birthday gifts.

Last Christmas the gift was slippers, with the unmistakable stitched grin on the toe. I threw those out into the cold winter air. Tossing them right out the open window.

Yet still, and when I least expect it, I will find one lurking just outside of my bedroom door or sitting silently on my bed...
On the Day of the Dead, during a family trip to Little Italy, we entered an adorable little shop full of cute knick-knacks as far as the eye could see. Immediately, I saw it, we locked eyes and I do believe it saw me too. It was the mother of all sock monkeys, sitting high up on a shelf like the royal queen. I stopped in the doorway frozen with crippling fright. A few tense moments later despite my attempt to back out of the store, my father dragged me in and asked the price of the monkey.

As it turns out, she was a steal at only three dollars. Needless to say, my father decided to buy it and soon I was carrying the creature around for the remainder of the night. On the long, uncomfortable ride home it sat squished up against me, grinning creepily.

Let’s just say, a few weeks later we took a special trip to donate a certain stuffed animal to a Goodwill store. That thing will forever haunt my dreams, but at least I know a little boy or girl will love and take good care of the toy I cannot bear to look in the eyes. Good riddance sock monkey!