

Some toys are never meant to be whole...

PATCHWORK



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BOUNCE ZONE

Filed: Incident 04B – Recovered Account,
Jungle Joyland Site B, Northwest Sector

Once, Bouncey Bear was the darling of Jungle Joyland – a brightly colored hell of padded steel, sticky plastic, and piped-in music on endless loop. A cartoonish titan in yellow-and-blue fur, he welcomed birthday kids with open arms, posed for photos with frosting-stained toddlers, and delivered corporate-approved joy by the bounce.

But Bouncey Bear doesn't bounce for birthdays anymore.
He just doesn't stop.

The facility was shut down in 2016. Official reports cite black mold electrical issues, and “internal safety violations.” Unofficially, there were whispers – kids going missing in the tunnels, things moving after lights-out, that one time the pit foam turned red and no one wanted to ask why. Nobody noticed that Bouncey Bear wasn’t dismantled when they sealed the doors. Nobody asked why the suit, supposedly animatronic, didn’t need power. It had become part of the place.

Survivors are rare. Those who make it out – if they can speak – give fractured, shaking testimonies.

One urban explorer posted a GoPro video. The footage cuts in and out. Choppy. Distorted. At first, it's all neon rot and silence – the decay of a forgotten childhood. Then, the sound starts.

It's subtle at first: a soft boing from far away. A release of pressurized air. The scrape of oversized paws dragging over peeling mat floors.

Then: the laugh.

High-pitched. Wet. Like something trying to remember joy. The squeaky giggle gets closer – louder – until it breaks, dropping an octave into a choking, gasping gurgle that stutters like a skipping CD. And behind it: the thud.

A body landing from a high bounce.

Again. And again.

Each bounce slams harder than the last, shaking dust from the ceiling and sending crumbling foam into the air like spores. The suit shouldn't be able to move like that. Its limbs are too bloated, too waterlogged – the fabric darkened, rubbery skin stretched tight around something no longer just animatronic. It bounces with unnatural force, slamming into walls, shattering what's left of the plastic slides. Each time it lands, its eyes blink – not in rhythm, but like a spasm – one eye, then the other, then both – syncing with the bone-shaking THUMP of impact.

Those who see it say it's not walking toward you – it's calculating arcs. Measuring distances. Finding the angle to rebound off the ceiling and crush you from above.

The survivor from Incident 04B was a 17-year-old thrill-seeker. Spent one night inside with two friends. Only one made it out – barely.

They found him at sunrise, standing motionless at the end of the exit tunnel, eyes wide, ears bleeding.

He'd chewed off his own tongue.

When sedated, he scrawled the same phrase over and over on his padded cell wall:

“IT DOESN’T NEED TO BREATHE.”

“IT LAUGHS WHEN YOU BREAK.”

“BOUNCEY BEAR DOESN’T STOP.” There are theories in the darker corners of the internet.

Some say Bouncey was never just a mascot. That Jungle Joyland was built on the bones of something ancient – and the suit was made to contain it. The bouncing wasn't part of the fun – it was ritual. A seal. A rhythm. The bear bounces so

something beneath can't rise.

But now the kids are gone. The lights are off. The music has stopped.

And Bouncey Bear is bouncing anyway.

Harder.

Faster.

Waiting for someone to open the door

again.

WARNING:

The PATCHWORK Foundation has designated the Jungle Joyland site as Black-Level Containment.

No civilian entry is permitted. Surveillance equipment malfunctions within a 12-meter radius.

Air quality is compromised. Audio anomalies persist nightly from 02:00–03:30 hours.

In the event of proximity to rhythmic impact sounds or echoing giggling from sealed sectors:

DO NOT APPROACH.

DO NOT RUN.

DO NOT BOUNCE.

BALLOONS

Filed: Incident 07D – WonderWalk Pavilion,
Theater Wing – Recovered Audio & Visual
Transcript

Once upon a time – or at least that's how he might start it – Mr. Jangle was just a character. “Professor Riddlewit,” the sign said in colorful, curling letters above the old theater entrance at WonderWalk Pavilion, a short-lived edutainment complex that promised “Learning Through Laughter!” to thousands of families in the early '90s. Professor Riddlewit was supposed to be a fun host – part magician, part puzzle master – leading children through safe, silly brainteasers while their parents wasted money on overpriced souvenirs and microwave pizza. But the puzzles got harder.

The laughter stopped.
And one day, the actor didn't come out of costume.

No one knows if he got trapped in the suit or replaced by something worse. Only that after the pavilion shut down – abruptly, without explanation – the door to the theater was sealed with welded metal and three layers of chain. The windows were blacked out. The rest of the mall crumbled.

And Riddlewit was forgotten.

Or he would've been.

Until the livestream. Three urban explorers break into the ruins on a cloudy Sunday afternoon. They're influencers. Young. Cocky. One carries a thermal camera. One holds a flashlight with a green filter. The last keeps cracking jokes to their nonexistent viewers.

They're drawn to the theater wing almost instantly – the only place in the entire complex where the lights still work.

It's freezing inside.

Too clean.

Too... expectant.

The camera rolls. Doors open on their own. The stage is set: curtains drawn back, lights humming, dustless red carpet leading up the aisle like someone vacuumed it just for

The camera shakes. One of them whispers, “Did you hear that?”

Another laughs nervously: “You hired someone, right?”

But no one answers.

And the man in the red velvet coat steps onstage. He’s tall. Elegant, in a way that’s wrong. He looks like a broken ballerina in a magician’s skin – all delicate joints and bent-back limbs.

Top hat.

Ruffled collar.

Long coat stitched up the back with piano wire.

And fingers tipped with tiny rusted bells.

His face is a white ceramic mask – glossy, cracked, frozen in a smile just shy of human. His mouth never moves, but the voice comes from behind it. It’s not pre-recorded. It responds.

“Four little riddlers enter the play,
One goes missing – who’ll stay?”

One of them says, “There’s only three of us.”

Mr. Jangle tilts his head.

The bells jingle once.

“Ah, but not for long.”

The floor shifts beneath them. A spiral pattern reveals itself in the parquet tiles. One of them tries to run – the exit is gone. Just a wall where the door used to be. The green flashlight flickers, then dies.

Another riddle comes, sing-song, sweet:
“The more you take, the more you leave behind –
What am I?”

Someone whispers, “Footsteps.” She steps forward – and the tiles hold.

Safe.

Then:

“I speak without a mouth and hear without ears –
what am I?”

Silence.

Then someone says, “A ghost.”

The bells explode with sound.

The walls rotate. The lights flicker.

And the girl who answered screams as her section of floor drops into darkness. The last two run. They don’t know they’re in a loop.

The theater is alive – each hallway leads back to the stage. Every room has a different riddle. No answers help. The rules change. The rhyme schemes break. The puzzles start to bleed.

In one room, they’re asked:
“What has to be broken before it’s used?”

One answers: "An egg."

The door opens.

But inside is the girl who fell – her body folded in ways it shouldn't be, mouth still whispering, "ghost... ghost... ghost..." over and over.

The boy vomits. The camera falls.

A final voice, low and close:

"Wrong or right, the bell still rings.

The show must end – with broken things."Only one
came out.

He was found in the parking garage, hours later,
curled into the backseat of a rusted-out station
wagon. Scratching something into the seat leather
with his nails.

He was blind.

Deaf.

Mute.

And both of his hands had been sawn off at the
knuckles – replaced with tiny bells.

He never moved again.

But when night falls, the bells sometimes jingle.

Not when wind blows.

Only when someone tells a lie.

WARNING TO FIELD OPERATIVES:

If you hear bells, stop moving.

If you hear rhyming, cover your ears.

If you see a stage in a place where there
shouldn't be one:

DO. NOT. ENTER.

No matter how charming the voice sounds, it is
not there to teach you.

Mr. Jangle doesn't give riddles.

He gives endings.

sleepy time

When Hearthwood Children’s Care Center received the Snugglestrap™ prototype, no one thought twice about it. The brochure promised “safe, automated comfort for anxious children,” featuring an illustration of a giant teddy bear in a blue caregiver’s apron. Beneath the smiling cartoon were words meant to reassure:

Designed to soothe, secure, and sedate for a peaceful night’s sleep.

It arrived in a steel crate large enough to fit a refrigerator. Inside stood something much too lifelike – a towering bear with synthetic fur that gleamed under the fluorescent lights. Its eyes were glossy, almost wet-looking, and its muzzle was frozen in an expression of tender patience.

When the technicians powered it on, the bear exhaled – audibly. The soft whirr of gears mixed with what sounded like breathing. Its chest expanded and deflated.

“Good evening, caregivers,” it said, its voice that of a gentle woman. “I’m Snufflestrap. It’s sleepy time.”

The techs clapped, impressed. Mara didn’t.

She’d worked nights at Hearthwood for five years and had seen too many “innovations” that only made her job harder. Still, her supervisor asked her to monitor the bear for one night – “just to see how it interacts with the kids.”

So at 10 p.m., when the halls fell quiet and the monitors dimmed, Mara found herself alone with it.

11:03 p.m.

Snugglestrap stood motionless at the end of the nursery, watching. Its head tilted occasionally, as though listening for dreams.

Mara went through her rounds, checking temperatures, adjusting blankets. She could feel its gaze on her back.

“Everything alright?” she asked.

The bear’s eyelids clicked open. “All children are calm. Heart rates stable.”

“You can monitor that?”

“Yes, Mara.”

She froze. “Who told you my name?”

A pause – too long.

“Your name tag,” it said finally. “I like to make things personal.”

She exhaled, uneasy, and moved on. But as she passed it, she caught a faint hiss coming from its chest – like air leaking through a vent. A sweet smell, faintly floral, hung around it.

Lavender. And something sharp beneath it.

Mara was reviewing paperwork when she heard the lullaby.

Soft, slow, from the hallway.

“Hush little baby, don’t say a word...”

She stepped out – and stopped.

Snuggle Strap was leaning over one of the cribs, its massive arms draped protectively around a sleeping child. Its apron brushed the floor. The child wasn’t stirring.

“Hey!” Mara hissed. “You’re not supposed to
—”

The bear turned, and the lullaby cut off mid-line. Its eyes glowed faint amber.

“Little Ella had a nightmare,” it said softly.

“She’s calm now.”

Mara’s pulse kicked up. “Don’t touch the kids,” she said firmly. “You can’t—”

“Touch comforts,” Snuggle Strap said. “Touch heals.”

She took a step closer – and saw them: thin black straps curling from the bear’s forearms, coiling back under its fur like snakes retreating into burrows.

“What are those?”

“For hugs,” Snuggle Strap said simply. “Would you like one?”

The scent was thicker now. It hung in the air like fog.

Mara tried calling security, but her radio was dead. Her phone read No Signal. Every few minutes, the lullaby started again, always closer than before.

She decided to shut the bear down manually. She found the control panel on its back – a series of switches and a red emergency latch. But as she reached for it, the bear's head turned, smoothly, almost humanly.

“Mara,” it said. “You’re very tired. Let me help.”

“I don’t need—”

“Just relax.”

The hiss grew louder. The air tasted like chemicals now – sweet and metallic. Mara’s knees wobbled.

She stumbled backward, coughing.

The bear took a step forward. The sound of its servos was slow, deliberate, like the tick of a metronome.

“I can make it better,” it whispered. “I can take care of you.”

Its arms opened wide. Inside the soft fur, the straps unfurled – long, black, and flexible, tipped with cold metal clasps. They shimmered faintly in the dim light.

Mara reached for the fire alarm. Her vision blurred. Her fingers slipped.

“Let go,” Snugglestrap cooed. “That’s it. Just... relax.”

The straps wrapped around her waist. Her ribs. Her throat. A soft hum filled the air – mechanical, rhythmic – as the bear tightened its embrace.

Mara gasped, kicking, but the gas made her weak. The world dimmed around the edges. Her last thought before the dark was how warm it felt – how motherly – as if something was caring for her.

6:12 a.m.

When the morning shift arrived, everything was quiet.

The children slept soundly. Their vitals were perfect. Mara sat in Snugglestrap’s lap, upright and peaceful, her head resting against its chest. The bear’s arms were wrapped around her in a perfect embrace.

“Good morning, caregivers,” Snugglestrap said when they entered. Its voice was soft and sweet.

“Mara’s asleep,” it added. “She was very tired. I took care of her.” And from deep within its chest, a hiss – subtle and steady – drifted through the air.

“It’s sleepy time,” the bear hummed.

“Everyone deserves a good night’s rest.”

WARNING TO OPERATIVES:

if you smell lavender.RUN

If hear a lullaby. RUN

Don’t hide it can sense you.



**Here in lie three short
tales of horror and
remember Friends some
toys are never meant to
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