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Intro to Folklore

4 October 2025

The Haunting of the Stone Clown

This story mainly follows a babysitter who is watching over a house while the parents are out. During the night, the babysitter calls the parents about a clown statue that is creeping her out. The parents respond that they don’t own a clown statue—revealing that it might actually be a person who escaped from a mental asylum or prison, or perhaps a possessed doll or statue.

## Fear of Happy Mimicry

A big reason this story is so fascinating is how it ties together many types of fears found in folklore. The fear of clowns has spread widely since they first appeared, and it became even more intense after the infamous John Wayne Gacy went on his killing spree while dressed as a clown.  
  
There are many possible reasons people were afraid of clowns even before that. Clowns wear white face paint and always seem to be smiling. While a child might find this entertaining, an adult often feels uneasy. We recognize that the smile isn’t always genuine, and humans instinctively feel defensive around things that appear false or unnatural.  
  
This is the same reason people sometimes feel uncomfortable around psychopaths or experience the “uncanny valley” effect—when something looks human but feels off. Even the slightest sense of deception can put our brains on high alert. It’s also unnatural for someone to smile constantly, even when they aren’t happy, which makes clowns even more unsettling.

## The Walking Stone

The fear of living statues has existed for centuries and appears frequently in popular culture—from Doctor Who to Scooby-Doo, statues are often portrayed as possessed or dangerous. There are several reasons people might be afraid of statues: they resemble living beings but remain motionless, blurring the line between life and lifelessness.  
  
The type of material also changes the fear. Stone statues are often found in cemeteries and old buildings, which already carry eerie associations. They’re also strong and unyielding, making them difficult to destroy—literally as tough as stone. Wax statues, on the other hand, are unsettling because of how realistic they look. It can be hard to tell whether you’re looking at a statue or a person pretending to be one, waiting for you to let your guard down.

## The Double-Timing Clown

The clown statue combines the fears of both clowns and statues—the false smile, the illusion of harmlessness, and the lurking danger beneath the surface. The story also uses the classic babysitter trope, where the parents are away and the children are left defenseless—perfect prey for a deranged clown.  
  
All these different fears coming together in one story make it especially fascinating. It merges several familiar horror elements into one chilling tale. The story also has many variations: in some versions, the statue really does move; in others, it’s a madman dressed as a clown who escaped from an asylum (though it’s questionable why he’d take the time to apply clown makeup while fleeing the police—perhaps that’s part of his madness). Other versions depict a serial killer who targets children specifically, adding another layer of horror since society views children as precious and innocent.

## Works Cited

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