

The Dream

Chapter One

In the eternal battle between Darkness and Light, chaos and destruction are the harbingers of the Shadow, while order and love emanate from the force of Light. Deep within the vast expanse of Darkness lies the dormant essence of True Light. The delicate balance between Light and Shadow remains a mystery to many, as it holds the key to profound understanding.

“Hello..... Where am I..... Am I dreaming?” If he said those words out loud or thought them in his mind, he couldn't tell the difference. The boy was lost in realm absent of light, revealing only visible darkness. Yet as he went deeper in his thoughts, he came to realize that it was merely a dream. Though the dream was vivid, it momentarily robbed him of his identity. However, recognition came back to him, this was not an unfamiliar dream. He experienced this before. Gradually his sense of self began to resurface, as his body floating through an everlasting lake of darkness.

“Jakob, Jakob Stryder.” he said with a small ounce of confusion, beginning to remember his own name.

“This is just a dream, you're okay, it's not real.” The thought burst into his head. In an instant, the water receded, and he found himself landing on a path. Jakob's hands were barely visible, with the only source of light being a faintly glowing path stretching out ahead of him. Taking cautious steps, he followed a black path with delicate white lines. A thin layer of cold water coated the path, sending shivers down Jakob's spine. With each step, a sense of familiarity began to stir in his mind.

“I've been here before.” He thought to himself. Looking beyond the path always stirred a sense of unease within him. Jakob couldn't shake the feeling that stepping outside the

path would lead to a plunge into a bottomless watery abyss. In past dreams, whenever he dared to venture off the path, he would abruptly wake up. Occasionally he embarked on what felt like hours of walking until he finally awoke. Throughout his young life, as he experienced this recurring dream, there was always an eerie sensation that he was not alone. At times, he could faintly hear a voice, but it would quickly fade. The path in his dream seemed to lead nowhere, and the voice remained elusive, an echo amidst the crashing waves of the abyss. However, this time, something was different. Usually, he would swing between thoughts, unsure of what to do. Should he continue walking, should he stop, or perhaps even venture off the path entirely. His mind would spin in endless circles of indecision. But today, everything changed.

Determined to unravel the mysteries of his recurring dream, Jakob made a firm decision, **"Today, I will keep walking until I reach the very end of this road."**

His inner voice longing for answers to understand the meaning behind the dream. At the young age of just fifteen, Jakob had a wisdom that surpassed his youth, as if he had lived multiple lifetimes. Yet, like any other child, he occasionally fell to the whims of irrational decision-making. His untidy, short dirty blonde hair served as a constant reminder of his desire to let it grow long, a wish he often expressed while running his fingers through it, despite his father's disapproval. Physically, he appeared smaller and leaner than most boys his age, with a square jaw reminiscent of his father's and his mother's striking, emotionally intense grey eyes. Jakob continued to walk slowly and carefully, and suddenly the path began to widen.

"It's never done this before." Just as that thought popped in his head, he heard the voice. In previous dreams the voice never sounded this clear, but he would always feel a bizarre energy that gave him chills.

“Long ago the world existed in balance and was embraced with love. The Light, beloved by all, held a special place in every heart. Yet some dared lust for the Darkness.” As Jakob ventured further, a hazy shape emerged in the distance, and the voice continued his tale.

“The one known as The Source, a creation born from the very essences of Darkness, emerged with a sole purpose, to obliterate the Light. It infiltrated the hearts and minds of the innocent, spreading its nefarious influence, devouring the Light as it should.”

Jakob knew the ancient stories of the Time of the Children, his mother read the stories to him since he was a baby. Most of the stories he heard were always about the Light, never were their conversations about the Shadow. Hearing the voice speak so happily about the Shadow made him eager to hear more. Jakob walked and walked continuing to get closer to the shape he saw off in the distance. As Jakob approached, his eyes widened in realization - before him stood a grand staircase. Its obsidian steps were meticulously outlined in white, mirroring the very path he had been walking. The magnitude of the staircase's height stunned him, but as a soft glow radiated from its surroundings, the darkness that enveloped him began to dissipate. It was then that he noticed the faint ripples in the water that encircled the staircase. Regardless of his fear, he bravely ascended the stairs, he soon realized that the waves stretching into the distance were unending, crashing against the horizon. He glanced towards the top, where he could see light from the edge. As he walked up the staircase, the voice continued,

"In a world consumed by The Source, sin and death reigned supreme. But amidst the chaos, righteous souls emerged as beacons of hope, valiantly battling to protect the Light. The Source, seemingly vanquished and cast into Infernum, continued to lurk in secrecy, patiently awaiting the opportune moment to strike again."

As Jakob ascended the staircase, beads of sweat formed on his forehead. He reached the top, panting slightly, and paused to catch his breath. When he glanced back, he was taken aback to see that the staircase now appeared to be significantly shorter, as if it had only been a few steps. He shifted his focus ahead of him, only to find himself standing on a platform made entirely of white bricks with distinct black outlines. To his astonishment, two doors were hovering on opposite sides of the circular platform. As Jakob stood there, the voice echoed around him,

"It is your time. Will you conquer the darkness, or will you let it swallow you?"

Although he couldn't comprehend where the voice came from or its meaning, he felt a strong feeling to approach the doors. The door on his left appeared pristine, painted in pure white, with a black door handle contrasting against it. On the other hand, the door on his right had a chilling darkness, its surface cracked and black, with no handle at all. Jakob's hesitant steps carried him closer to the white door.

A gentle breeze wafted through the air, carrying a scent that stirred memories deep within him. The familiar scent of his mother's embrace and the comfort of home. As Jakob took a step closer, he noticed a gleaming silver crown lying on the ground. Its dark navy-blue crystals caught his eye, revealing it to be the legendary Crown of the King of Legion. His hand instinctively reached out to grasp it, but in that moment, he noticed something on the white door before him. Pausing, he withdrew his hand and looked up, his eye fixed on the door's surface that reflected his own image. To his confusion, the reflection portrayed an older man decorated in armor, wearing the crown atop his head. It resembled his father, yet there was a similarity to himself. A mix of curiosity and uncertainty filled Jakob as he extended his hand towards the door handle, ready to open it. But an unexpected reluctance gripped him, urging him to turn towards the black

door instead. As his eyes fell upon the door, a surge of excitement coursed through him, quickening his heartbeat. He couldn't resist the pull, and he started moving towards the door. Approaching the black door, the sound of crashing waves grew louder, echoing in his ears. He stopped in his tracks as he felt the sensation of sand beneath his feet. Looking down, he discovered that the floor was covered in black sand. His gaze shifted upward, and he noticed a small mound of sand to the right of the door. Sticking out from the sand was a large pirate cutlass, with a pirate's hat resting on its pommel. Intrigued, Jakob reached out and grabbed the hat, immersing himself in an unfamiliar scent. The aroma carried notes of burnt coconuts, vanilla, cinnamon, and a hint of spice. In the door he caught a reflection of the same man he had seen in the first door, only this time dressed in the attire of the infamous Cree Pirates. With each step closer, a realization dawned upon Jakob, captivating his mind.

“Is that me?” He pondered silently.

The scene before Jakob held him gripped, as he saw an older version of himself. With a glance back at the distant white door, a wave of anxiousness washed over him. His eyes darted back and forth, torn between the path of light and the allure of darkness. He knew deep down that returning to the safety of the white door, was the right choice. Yet, his heart desired the mysterious depths of the black door, drawing him with an exhilarating pull. It sparked a longing for adventure and a desire to embrace the unknown. Pausing for a moment, Jakob collected his thoughts and took a deep breath, summoning his courage. Determined to follow the path that called to him, he reached out to push open the black door. However, just as he began to reach, a piercing scream shattered the air, a sound that seemed hauntingly familiar,

“Jakob Nooooo!” It was his mother's voice.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

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