

The Dream Pier

A normal Wednesday night, tossing and turning, Zach Hamilton fought with his mind, his blankets and bed to get to sleep, just as he did every night. Now, just because he did it every night didn't mean it worked. Some days he had been more tired, so naturally, he fell asleep faster, and others he had woken up late. The way he normally remembered his dreams was in a strange way. They were all fuzzy and and distorted, he could count the number of real-feeling dreams he had in his lifetime on one hand, which, for an eighteen-year-old, is a bit odd.

Still, he continued to count sheep. One by one, they hopped through his mind, until he fell asleep. Zach expected his thoughts to jolt him awake just as he was drifting off, but they didn't. For once in his life, Zach fell asleep peacefully.

And then he woke up. Except, when he woke up, he was not in his bedroom, he was at local park. At the park, Zach saw many people, most he knew from around the area, some he did not. *This is great!* Zach thought to himself, for he was finally having a dream that he knew was a dream.

A tall woman sat directly across from him, she looked completely average, and she was sitting on a bench under an oak tree. Zach spun around slowly, taking in all his surroundings, and returned to his position beside the playground. The woman was still there, except, she was looking straight at Zach.

She opened her mouth to say something, but all that came out was a shrill beeping sound, Zach's eyes fluttered awake. The beeping sound was coming from his alarm clock, its red, glowing numbers indicated it was 7:00 PM

School.

Zach scrambled to make breakfast, and gather all of the homework he had done the night before.

The night before. What was Zach supposed to make of that dream he had, didn't all dreams mean *something*? What would that woman have said if the alarm didn't cut her off? He had so many questions, however, he still had to get to school. He almost swallowed his scrambled eggs whole while trying to lace up his shoes at the same time. Once he had everything together, he drove off to school.

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That same hectic Thursday, when Zach got home, the fatigue hit him like a ton of bricks, and he plopped down on his comfortable bed, and decided to take a quick nap before starting his homework. This was one of the rare times when he was ready to go to sleep, and did not have to count sheep before drifting off into an uncomfortable state of sleep.

Somehow, he found himself at a party, with people in strange outfits, and blacklight bulbs providing the only light in the place, it was a halloween party, and who might Zach have seen besides the woman in his first dream, she was dressed in a white gown. Finally, Zach would finally hear what she had to say. The woman noticed Zach and called out to him, her voice thin and wispy, "Zachary," she cried, "bad things are coming," bad things? When would these alleged bad things happen?

"What do you mean?" He asked, and she replied, "Don't go to the-"

SLAM.

Zach jolted awake, and realized he had been sleeping for three hours, because at around six, his dad came home from work. Feeling well rested for once, Zach started on his homework, and by the time he had a good bit done,

the usual nine o'clock dinner was on the table. It was baked chicken, with string beans and mashed potatoes that were always a little runny. After they were done eating, Mr. Hamilton fell asleep on the couch watching whatever movie was on at the time, and Zach went up to his room to finish the last of his homework and go to bed, but when he got to the top of the stairs, his stomach lurched. His head went cloudy with pain, and he decided to go out, clear his mind, and wake up early the next morning to do the remainder of his homework. So, he called out to his sleeping father, "Dad, I'm going outside to get some fresh air, if you need me, I'll be at the Delrose Pier," And Mr. Hamilton shouted a sleepy "all right, Zach, don't get home too late," Zach nodded and walked out.

When Zach got to the pier it was cold, so he hugged himself for warmth. Standing at the edge of the pier, Zach felt a bit of weightlessness, as if he was pushed by an imaginary force, but he regained his balance, turned around, and walked back home.

Zach walked in, and went up to his room. His desk was still a mess of pens and books, except, to his surprise, there was a fancy looking envelope on his desk. The envelope was sealed with a purple wax stamp, marked with

Zach's initials, and it was perfectly written in shiny gold ink. Zach opened it with his letter blade, and revealed the black page inside. The page had small words written in uniform calligraphy reading: *I'm Evelyn, the woman you've been dreaming about, which is not coincidental by the way. Meet me at Delrose Pier tomorrow at 7:30 PM, I have something important to tell you, Zachary. Something's happened to you.*

A shudder rose up on Zach, and he felt a wave of sleepiness. He decided the next morning, after doing his homework of course, he would gather materials for his excursion to go and meet the mysterious *Evelyn* at the pier. So, he leapt into bed, set his alarm half an hour early, piled on the covers, and fell right asleep on the fourteenth sheep he counted.

Zach woke up feeling refreshed, and he realized he didn't remember a single dream he had that night, and honestly, he wasn't even sure if he had any at all. After finishing his homework, getting dressed and brushing his teeth, Zach made and ate breakfast, and drove to school.

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At precisely 3:24, Zach arrived home, and did all his homework. When his father came home, it was 6:12. *Might as well tell dad I'll be going*, Zach thought, "Hey, Dad, I'm going over to Logan's house tonight at 7:30, don't

worry, I'll be back for dinner," He called downstairs "Sure," His father answered, muttering to himself; "Logan, never heard of a Logan," So, at 7:20, Zach drove to Delrose Pier, and sat on a bench just off the dock. He waited, and at 7:33, he felt a hand on his shoulder, which made him jump.

Evelyn.

"Wake up, Zach" She said, "*Wake up,*"

Light flashed, and before Zach could tell what was happening, a beeping noise filled the room. It was as if a city truck was backing up on the street, alerting anyone near by. But sadder. Zach opened his eyes, and noticed he was on a hospital bed, with IV needles in his left arm.

"Good morning, Zach Hamilton," A doctor greeted Zach. "Why am I here?" Zach choked. The doctor smiled, "You fell off the dock at Delrose Pier, Thursday, November the fourth, your dad said you had gone out for some fresh air, and you never came back, so they searched the pier, and it turned out, you had fallen into the cold water, hitting your head on the dock

on your way down, which knocked you out for, let's see... Twenty two hours now,"

How could that have been? Zach had never fallen off the dock, he would have remembered that. He specifically remembered walking home, finding the letter in his room... Was all that a dream? A mere hallucination? That would explain Evelyn mysteriously telling him to 'wake up'. Maybe she was right, maybe this was the bad thing that happened.

But was she even real?

Zach's thoughts were interrupted by his father waking up, and realizing that his son had also woken up from his comatose state. They hugged, and were given all the details of how Zach was affected by his fall. Concussion, acute hypothermia (which had been treated, thank goodness), and a minor finger fracture.

Zach was discharged from the hospital a day later, and he returned to his normal life of homework, fuzzy dreams, and 9 PM dinners, and he couldn't have been more thankful for anything else in the entire world. He had come to terms with the fact that Evelyn was just something his brain made up to cope with the fact that he had lost the memory of falling at the pier.

Until...

Almost a year later, when he *could have sworn* he saw the same 'Evelyn' that was in his dreams, sitting on a bench, under an oak tree, in a crowded park. *The End.*

Word count: 1498