The room glowed brighter than the sun. Yet it did not hurt, nor did I have to squint to see. It was like as the brightness of a cloudy day in which the clouds are just barely covering the sun. But the room was also empty. Not one object stood anywhere. Come to think of it, the room didn’t even have walls; it just stretched on forever. That was another thing, I could see forever, not like standing on a high mountain on a clear day. I could see all of the emptiness. It was not something easily explained.

When I turned around to see all of the emptiness, I saw only a man instead. His hair, clothes, and even his eyes were white, the same pure white as the rest of the room. He stood with his hands firmly at his side, his chin held high but humbly, and a calming smile on his face. He stepped towards me and his bare feet made not a single sound.

He looked me in the eyes and waited for me to speak.

I asked, “Where am I?”

“You are no longer in the Evenstan Park, if that is what you are asking.” His voice came from nowhere but everywhere at once.

He was right, I was in the park before, but what was I doing here? I could not remember.

“You are no longer on earth.”

“So, am I dead?”

“Presumably.”

“Then I must be in heaven. I imagined it would be more… crowded.” I looked around.

“No, this is not heaven, you are in an in between place, a middle ground known by some people as Limbo; although, it is not an evil place. This is a realm in which we call, the Dream State. You are currently not alive, nor are you dead. Every person passes through here to determine whether they live the rest of eternity in heaven, or as a demon.” Two doors appeared behind the man.

“What are the demons?” I asked.

“They are those who failed to perfect their life and failed to complete the same test I will give you. They usually appear in dreams, as the nightmares and the things of sorrow.”

“Obviously you passed the test.”

“No, actually I have not taken it yet, I will be tested the same time you are.”

“So you’re not…”

“No,” he laughed, “I am just an angel, same as you.” He said this as if I had said my thoughts aloud.

I then asked my next question, “What is the test?”

“In this dream state, you can actually visit other dreams. Dreams are the gateway to how someone thinks. If their dreams are dark and serious, they will become so. But we must protect those dreaming in their dreams so they become positive and good. We have to go into their dreams and fight off any and all of the demons that enter their mind.” He turned to the door on his right and I stepped to the left. “If you fail, you will become one of the very things we fight and they will grow up to follow in your footsteps, unfortunately, and when they die they will choose not to be tested.”

“What do I use to stop them?” I hoped for special weapons of sorts.

He disappointed me instead, “The dreamer controls the dream, and he will give you what you need. It all depends on how you use it. The only rule is to not be seen by him. If you are, he will subconsciously turn you into something he can comprehend and you will be stuck in that state.”

And with that he opened the door and stepped in. Before the door closed I could hear music as if from some kind of carnival. The aperture sealed and the music ceased. I looked at mine and held my hand out to the door handle, but I felt only air. There was no handle, instead I had to push it open. And when I did, the rush of summer air filled the space around me. Trees whistled and the sun shone, no brighter than it did inside the room. As I walked in, the door closed behind me and suddenly I was wearing a white robe of some sort. I had been turned into an angel, just like the other man. I appeared to be in the back yard of some street, under the balcony of a house.

I immediately ducked down when I saw the boy I was to protect. He had brown hair and a somewhat small body for his age. His face shown with fear, he did not move; his feet were stuck to the ground with what appeared to be some kind of glue.

Then, from three houses down, three very large and very destructive looking black dogs came rushing out. They had red eyes and their white fangs gleamed in the sun’s rays, their black fur flowing in the wind. They all pounded at the ground with unearthly speed and in mechanical unison.

I knew instantly that these were the demons I would have to stop. But how could I stop them right in front of the boy? I looked around to find the weapon the boy was supposed to supply me with, but I saw nothing but some gardening tools which appeared a little blurry. He wasn’t focusing on them, which caused them to be something of unimportance. These must have been the weapons.

I grabbed the shovel and turned towards the boy, he didn’t try to squirm out of the glue, and he didn’t try to run away. He just sat down and put his head in his hands. He just wanted to leave this nightmare. I knew if he died in a dream he would have to wake up. So I decided to help him.

Just as the dogs leaped up to bite at him, I threw the shovel at his head. If I couldn’t save him, I would have to wake him up. The shovel splashed through the boy as he turned into a cloud of dust. Everything instantly vanished and I was standing again in the white room. The other angel stood not far away next to another door.

“You woke him up.” The angel said.

“Yes, I didn’t have any way to stop the demons.”

“I would have done the same. But you do know he won’t stay awake for very long.”

“I know.” I looked at the door, “Why are you going into another?”

“Well the average living person has about six dreams a night, three of which are sometimes nightmares. This is the second.”

“So I am not done yet.” I actually became a little dismayed that I would not be able to go to heaven yet.

“These are the most important dreams he will ever have. You must make sure he is safe and protected. When the next door comes, make sure you can stop the demon as quickly as possible.” And with that he stepped inside the door.

I waited for only a few minutes before the next door appeared. I didn’t hesitate to open it and instantly I smelled the sweet smell of pines. I didn’t know if the boy could smell the pines as well or hear the faint river, but I enjoyed it.

I was in a small forest. To the north there was a cement roof on pillars over a road, the road led over a cement bridge over the river a good distance down. The road just stopped in front of the trees. The place where I was standing looked to be a camping site. A deep river in a ravine traveled in a semi circle around the campsite, rushing fairly fast towards the north and where the road went. I counted twelve people in the campsite along with the boy; I was positioned behind a large tree near the edge of the ravine.

Two boys on bicycles road across the bridge into the camp site. They got off, both wearing black and stepping quickly: the demons. In unison they both raised two jet black handguns and began to point them at people. Everything in the dream became blurry to the point in which I couldn't tell what anything was. But gunfire sounded all around me. It was terrifying to me, not because of straight fear, but because I couldn’t think of any way to stop guns. The boy, the only thing not blurry, had hid down behind a fallen tree and was lying on his side looking through a gap between branches.

I decided there was no point in trying to wake him again; I would have to reveal myself. I ran out from where I was and charged one of the demons, the second had been taken down by a few of the people there but the first was overwhelming them. As I ran towards him, I noticed that my appearance changed; I was taller and older, not by too much though. I instantly knew that I was portraying the boy's father: I had been seen and he had changed me to fit his dream.

I wrapped my arms around the attacker and drove him towards a cliff. Not the ravine but one that towered over a small pool. I gave one last push and both I and the demon barreled over the cliff. The demon exploded into black dust and I suddenly landed on a hard wood floor in some house.

The third dream.

I automatically knew the layout of the entire three story house and where the boy was. I looked over and saw a man; he was the boy's best friend's father.

"They’re in trouble!" I shouted to him and pointed up the stairs.

He seemed to understand what I said and pointed to the nearest couch, "We'll need this," he said.

It seemed logical to me, so I grabbed the side of the couch closest to me and we climbed the stairs to the third story. I heard the boy screaming something I could not hear and I kicked open the door and went in. I was again seen by the boy as his father, but I didn't care.

The demon sat perched on the window sill, the three story drop at his back. But the demon looked at me and I realized it was in fact, the angel I had talked to earlier. He must have failed his test and was here to stop me. Thankfully, we had a couch.

Both I and the friend’s father hurled the couch at the window. The demon was shoved out, though, sure to come back. I wasted no time and grabbed the boy by his arm. We were suddenly outside on a trail running away from somewhere. I was no longer his father, but an angel again. The boy was not paying attention to me but was looking at the bushes and leaves of orange and red, therefore, I had my own chosen weapon; a pure white sword.

We traveled farther and I began to have the feeling of dread nearby. The demon jumped out from behind a bush, he ran at me and the boy fell down. I swung my sword without hesitation and the demon exploded into a cloud of dust which spun and spread into the air.

I turned to the boy who was still looking at the bushes even though he was down. With a sword in my right hand, I reached my left out to him to help him up. He only saw my hand before he woke up and the dream disappeared.

I was standing in the white room again. A single opened door stood in front of me, the brightness of that room exceeding this room. One angel, a different one, stood facing me.

"You have completed the test," Was all he said.

"If it is alright, I would like to stay here and help new angels and stay with this boy instead of going to heaven." I asked.

The angel nodded and suddenly, I was by myself, happy with my new job.

It didn't take very long before the boy fell asleep again.