

Dark Dreams

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Dedication

For The Dreams That Inspired This

Halle didn't know when it started. As long as she could remember, she would dream about the day that would develop following her sleep.

But now the dreams were becoming more intense, scarily accurate, predicting what would occur.

"Like a premonition?" Halle's colleague asked.

"Yeah. Kind of." She replied.

"Do you feel like there's a sense of *Déjà vu*?" The colleague asked, curious as to how accurate the dreams were.

"It's like the entire day is foretold for me," Halle said. "Everything from me getting out of bed, having breakfast, catching the train to work, whatever occurs along the way, what happens at work, then coming home, having dinner, watching television, then going to bed. It's all there."

"Man, that must feel like you're doing the same work twice!" Her colleague laughed. It sounded absurd.

"I know. It sounds ridiculous, but it's getting worse." Halle said, her tone epitomizing the constant dread she was starting to feel.

"So, what am I about to say or do?" Her colleague pushed.

"It's not that granular. It's more general, but I know you'll go back to your desk and then I'll have to call you over again because my computer crashes." Halle replied.

"And what if I just stay here? Will that change things? If you do something deliberately different to what you're expecting to happen, what will happen then?" He asked.

"They say you can't mess with fate. It will just delay what was foretold in my dream. I've tried to do that. The other day I tried to drive to work because I knew, from my dream, the train would be delayed." Halle told him.

“That’s not uncommon, given Southern Rail’s god-awful record.” He joked.

“But my car wouldn’t start. I had no choice but to get the train. It’s like a spanner is thrown in the works and thwarts whatever action I try to take to go down a different path. It’s like “it” knows.” Halle was exasperated. She’d never really explained this to anyone else before and laying it out seemed to be making her perspective on it more dreadful.

“Aren’t the dreams pretty mundane though?” The colleague asked.

“They have been. But last night it was different.” Halle said, exhaling a loud sigh.

“How so?” He asked.

“On the way home, a cyclist jumps a red light,” She paused, knowing David had an issue with red-light jumpers and waited for him to comment, but he didn’t so she continued. “A car hits him. He comes off the bike and disappears under the wheels of a lorry. There’s a lot of blood. And some woman screams for what is the longest time. It’s ear-piercing.”

“Oh God, how awful!” David exclaimed.

“I’m scared to go home.” Halle explained.

“I can imagine.” David replied.

David returned to his desk and, as predicted, Halle called him back to hers within a few minutes. Her PC had crashed as she’d anticipated.

“Is anyone with you when the accident occurs?” David asked Halle as he rebooted the computer.

“No. I’m alone.” Halle replied.

“Okay. I’ll come with you and watch out for cyclists. I’ll stop them from jumping the red light. See what happens.” David suggested.

“I’m not sure that will work, but I’m willing to try anything. Especially if it saves someone’s life.” Halle replied.

At around five o’clock that evening, Halle and David left the office, heading towards the train station. As promised, David looked around for any errant cyclists that looked suspiciously as if they were going to ignore the red light that was showing at the junction nearest to the office.

As they neared the lights, David saw a cyclist coming down the hill at breakneck speed. There was no way, David thought, that the rider, a young man in his twenties, would stop in time at the lights, even if he had wanted to.

“Stop!” David yelled, as loud as he could.

The cyclist looked round, waved his left hand with its middle finger extended towards David and Halle, then the bike hit the curb. The cyclist lost control and went over the handlebars, landing on his back in front of the bike which careered into him.

Just at that moment, a car horn sounded. Halle and David looked up from the cyclist and saw a car veering away from a large truck, which in turn sounded its horn as if in response.

The truck narrowly missed the car, which stopped just in front of the cyclist.

“What did you do that for?” The cyclist yelled at David, as he picked himself and his damaged bike up from the floor.

“Trust me mate, I saved your life.” David replied.

“Oh my God. It worked. It actually worked.” Halle said. She was shaking at having beaten fate.

“There is no fate but what we make.” David said smugly, quoting one of his favourite movies.

Halle and David parted ways at the station.

“See you tomorrow,” Halle said, the relief in her voice palpable. “And thank you.”

“No problem. See you tomorrow.” David replied, as he set off towards the car park to retrieve his vehicle, looking back to see Halle enter the train station.

The next day, David toured the office and was surprised not to see Halle at her desk.

“No Halle today?” David asked another colleague.

“No. She’s phoned in sick. Well, kind of.” The colleague replied.

“What happened?” David asked.

“She saw a horrific accident on the way home. A cyclist was crushed under a lorry.” The colleague advised. David felt the blood drain from his face.

“But we stopped that.” David said, his voice shaking.

“Are you okay?” The colleague asked.

“We stopped the cyclist from hitting the car after he jumped a red light,” David said. “We stopped the accident.”

“This was on a roundabout near where Halle lives. Car, truck and cyclist involved apparently. It’s all over the local news.” The colleague told David.

David rushed back to his desk and called up an internet browser and entered “roundabout accident” in the search engine. The screen popped up several suggestions, one of which pertained to an article in the local paper. David clicked on it and read the headline.

“Campaigners call for more controls on red-light jumpers after cyclist dies on notorious roundabout.” David read.

The article went on to describe how the lights on the roundabout were frequently ignored and, in this instance, by three people, one driving a car, another driving a lorry and, tragically, a cyclist who was hit by the car and forced under the wheels of the lorry resulting in catastrophic and fatal injuries.

David was shaking. It was almost exactly as Halle had described it.

For the rest of the day, David could think about nothing else. He left work early, exhausted by the trauma that he and Halle had failed to disrupt.

He went to bed early, his body and mind overwrought by what had happened.

“God knows how Halle must feel if I feel like this?” David asked himself as he settled down to sleep.

The next morning, David woke and showered, dressed and made his way to work in the same way as he had numerous times before.

As he approached his desk, he saw Halle at hers.

“I heard what happened,” David said, truly appalled. “Must have been horrific.”

“It was. There was so much blood,” Halle said. “And that woman’s scream. That seemed...”

“To go on for the longest time.” David interrupted, finishing Halle’s sentence.

“Yes,” Halle replied. “But something strange happened afterwards.”

“You didn’t dream.” David said.

“How do you know that?” Halle asked.

“Because I did. I’ve dreamt the whole of today.” David replied.

“Oh my God.” Halle said, placing her hands over her mouth in horror.

“It’s passed over to me. You best stand up.” He told Halle.

“Why?” Halle asked, standing up cautiously.

“The spring in your chair is about to snap.” David advised. A second later, there was a loud crack and the metal spring underneath the chair snapped. As a result, the chair fell apart.

David seemed in a daze. He walked away from Halle, leaving her at her desk as she moved the chair away and took another from an empty desk to sit on.

David exited the building.

“There is no fate but that we make.” David said as he walked to the train station. He purchased a ticket and walked onto the platform, then the tracks, as the high-speed Bournemouth to London train travelling at one-hundred miles an hour sped through.

David’s body was decimated by the impact.

A woman on the platform was reported in the local paper later that day as screaming, “for the longest time” at the trauma she witnessed.

Halle never dreamed again..