Living your Dreams

Dreams. A simple word that describes a multitude of thoughts and feelings. He used to dream that in the future he would be a pro ball player, but a lifetime of clumsiness and lack of athletic ability snuffed it out. In high school he dreamed that he would become the CEO of a major company. He would be the big boss. He would be able to laugh at everyone who teased him in high school. He would be living the dream.

As the years ticked by, Owen learned to open his eyes and mind. He realized his limits. He watched dream after childhood dream come and go like the clouds on a spring day. Floating gracefully out of reach. Time seemingly stopped for them but not him.

Though his childhood dreams came and went, he never stopped dreaming. It was the secret motivator. The mountain that he intended to conquer. His life blood.

After graduation, he got a position in a business firm. He went to his cubicle day in and day out except on weekends and holidays. He bent his head and did his work. He shined in various projects and slowly rose in the ranks in the company. Maybe, he hoped, his dream would come true.

To a bystander, Owen seemed to be a normal, hardworking individual. He always wore a suit and tie complete with polished black dress shoes. His dark hair was combed back and neat. His face was always clean shaven and he never treaded on other people's toes. To that bystander, he was remarkably ordinary.

What the bystander didn't know was the Owen after work. Not even his friends knew this "true" Owen. It was the version of himself that he hid with all of the meticulous morning preparation. It was the side of him that would most likely emerge if anyone took the time to engage in a deep conversation with in. Something that no one had done, nor did he encourage, since his older brother Bobby died in a camping accident when Owen was ten.

It wasn't the fact that his brother died that scarred Owen so much. It was that Owen's dream-nay nightmare killed him and Own found his body by the river near the camp site. No one believes his story. Different psychiatrists wrote it off as post-traumatic stress since he found the body. But Owen knew that it was the Native American from his nightmare. However, since that time Owen never spoke of his nightmares to anyone, out of fear that they would be next. If only he didn't tell Bobby...if only...He might still be alive....if only.

Owen's nightmares seemed to come more often than the dreams. But unlike the dreams that seemed to come and go, the nightmares always stayed. They were apart of him. The pieces that threatened to tear him apart every time he dared to close his eyes.

He discovered a way of decreasing the frequency of them, but at the cost of increased severity. Every night of the week, besides Friday, he would set his alarm to wake him at predetermined intervals. Right before he entered REM. Right before the nightmares came. However the cost was quality sleep and all of the repercussions of that. So he allowed himself to fall into a coma like state every Friday. Though he would wake rested, he would also wake a mental mess. They were getting worse and Owen could only imagine what the breaking point was. His only outlet to remove those thoughts from his mind was to write them in a small black, leather notebook that he hid under his pillow. He was trying to find a pattern behind the madness, but it evaded him.

It was Friday night. Subsequently it was the night before Halloween. Owen wasn't a superstitious man so he prepped for his night of terror. He needed to be well rested before the company party the following night. He took a single sleeping pill with the remainder of the orange juice in his white fridge. Then he changed into his sleepwear before climbing into his queen size bed. He got comfortable before reaching for the two ends the straps laced beneath his bed. He strapped himself in to ensure no sleep walking and then laid his writing head on the cold, softness of his pillow. The pill was starting to kick in. Come at me Chief. Come and ge-- Darkness swept his mind.

There was a scream to ring in Halloween. One burst then silence. Not long enough for anyone to truly register. Blood soaked the once white sheets of the queen size bed. It wouldn't be until Owen's friend knocked at his apartment door to see about the party that anyone discovered he was no more. The smell of the body was the tip off.

When the police entered the apartment they discovered a number of things. Owen's body was still strapped to his bed, he was missing most of his skin neck down, there was blunt force trauma to his skull, his once stormy green eyes froze open in fright, and lying in a small puddle of blood was a small black leather journal. The detective at scene picked it up and flipped through it. Some of the pages were unreadable because of the blood. But he was able to make out some passages.

*It’s been one year since Bobby’s murder. I know they say it is not my fault. But I know it is. I told Bobby about the Chief. And the teepee. The line of children. The blood red moon. I told him everything and now he is dead. I---*

*June 2009*

 *Just graduated high school. So ready to go to college in the fall. I am going to have a blast and put the past behind me. Put that night in the woods behind me. Bobby. Why you? It should have been me. The nightmare is recurring. Nearly the same. Except one small detail. The line of children keeps moving. They have no faces that I can see. But their screams of pain ring in my ear all day. I feel tortured. I feel confused. What could this dream mean? What is the chief doing to the children in the teepee? I remember the blood red moon is getting redder with every passing nightmare. The smoke from the top of the chimney. I don’t understand. Why? I can’t tell anyone about these nightmares. I do not want someone else’s blood on my hands…*

*August 15, 2014*

 *The nightmares are less frequent due to the sleep pattern I have adapted. But every time I have one, they jump in severity. The most recent: I am now in the line. A line made of faceless children crying. I thought I saw Bobby tonight. Standing silently near the entrance to the Chief’s teepee. I tried to run to him but I am chained into the line. I can’t escape. I can see the shadows in the teepee, casted by the glowing fire. I can see a tomahawk lying on the ground near the foot of the Chief. The fire glints off a blade as another faceless child is silenced. What does he do to the children? How many have there been? I see there are around 70 faceless children in front of me. They are not chained. Only I. Why don’t they run? RUN! RUN!*

*October 24, 2014*

 *There are only six children in front of me. The horrors continue. The heat from the fire sears my eyes, drawing forth tears. I am still chained. Bobby remains by the entrance of the teepee. Expressionless. Escorting the next faceless child into the teepee. The ground of the teepee is red with blood. I am now close enough to see this. The fire leaves heavy shadows over the Chief’s face. He too is faceless in my view. The tomahawk remains in its same position. Never used. Never changed. There are shadow people in the dark surrounding the teepee. Not substantial like the faceless children. They are whispers. They are omens. Does this mean that my end is coming? I was able to duck my head a little and see through the exit on the other side of the teepee. The sight made me sick. Hundreds of faceless children sitting. All of their faces trained on the moon. All of them skinless from the neck down. Their never ceasing blood still trickles over their glistening muscles and gleaming bones. What could it all mean? I shout the question towards Bobby. But no sound did he hear. The moon looks like is a sagging sac of fresh blood. A small cut and then the moon would bleed out, leaving the pale whiteness of its former self. This red land, more red and more poisoned.*

*October 31*

*It is my turn. The moon is bleeding. Constantly bleeding. The chief is here. I know he is here. It’s my TURN. Bobby? I’m so sorry. Forg---*

That night the detective went to bed, his mind still on the notebook. Was this Owen character mad? Did he actually kill his brother? Who killed him in such a gruesome way? A stalker? A vicious enemy?

He closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep.

***Why did you read my journal? Now you carry the curse… the expressionless faced man floated away from him. He stood next to a similar looking man near a teepee. The detective looked around him at the line… of faceless children. The screams rang in his ears as the bright white moon was stained red.***