

Boyd Thomas London

Dream Wanderer

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this novel to all those who have been injured in car accidents caused by someone driving under the influence of alcohol. A DUI accident causes so much pain and suffering, not only to those injured physically, but also to the victim's family and friends. I urge people to please make the choice to not drive after drinking and to choose a designated driver.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my cousin Jack London. Jack London is my distant cousin, and he has always been an inspiration to me. He loved adventure, and he used every minute of his time to work towards achieving his goals. He lived by his credo which inspires me to work harder at all that I do. If he were alive today, I would love to climb aboard his ship and sail the seas with him.

Jack London's Credo

"I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them, I shall use my time."

Chapter 1

Enter the Realm of the Dream Wanderer

Joe Blake is blinded by the bright headlights as the car runs the red light and comes straight towards him from the right. As the gray Ford Explorer slams into the right side of his red sports car, his life flashes before him. With a handsome six-foot build and sandy-blond hair, he is a good-looking twenty-two-year-old. He is the star quarterback for the UCLA Bruins and is on his way home from a game. The vision of throwing the winning touchdown pass, only an hour earlier, is the focus of his mind as his head is whipped against the left driver's side window with enough force to instantly shatter the window into thousands of tiny pieces of glass. As he is being knocked unconscious, his mind focuses on images of his loving parents, Dave and Susan, his younger brother, Mark, and his younger sister, Annie, before his mind goes totally black. He is immersed in a gloomy, black world until he suddenly wakes.

"Ouch!" he yells as he reaches up to rub the throbbing left side of his head. "Where am I?" he murmurs as he opens his eyes to see dimly lit, gray walls.

He can see that he is in some type of a tunnel, with a distant opening where light is coming in about sixty yards to his right. He staggers to his feet. There's a large, circular cave-like room about twenty-five yards to his left. He walks down the small

tunnel and enters the room. The air is cold and damp, and there is a sullen smell, like death. As he enters the large circular room, he can see a pile of bones.

“What is this place? Am I dead?” he hollers, causing his words to echo throughout the cave.

He can see that there is a sword, belt, and sheath lying amongst the pile of bones. He reluctantly reaches into the pile of bones, removes the sharp double-edged sword, pulls the belt through the clasps on his Levi pants, and puts the sword in its sheath. All of a sudden, he hears a loud screaming roar from above him. He quickly looks up and sees a huge glowing beast drop from the ceiling and land directly in front of him. The beast stinks like a dead, rotting animal and towers more than ten feet tall. A loud breathing sound is coming from the creature. It has a huge muscular body, like a bear, but has a head that resembles some type of an ape. The beast’s teeth and claws are long and razor sharp.

Joe is trembling in fear, and he cries out, “This can’t be real!” The creature is not covered with fur, but rather by some type of scales that are glowing in the dark. It resembles something that you would only see in a nightmare.

“Ra!” the creature roars as it swings its massive arms and razor sharp claws at Joe’s head. He quickly dodges the beast’s blows, as if the creature was a charging defensive back about to sack him. He rapidly has the sword out of its sheath and in

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his right hand. The monster opens its large mouth and displays row after row of green, glowing teeth. It leaps at Joe, and he dives to the ground and rolls out of the way. He quickly springs to his feet and raises the sword, as if it was a football. He winds back his right arm, like he was about to throw a forty-yard pass to a wide receiver, and he hurls the sword into the creature's chest.

"Ah!" the beast cries out as it falls backwards and lies motionless on the ground. Joe sprints over to the beast, pulls out the sword, puts the sword in its sheath, and runs towards the front of the cave's entrance, with the same momentum as if he was running for a touchdown.

He reaches the front of the cave and his mouth drops open in wonder and terror as he climbs out of the cave and gazes into the surrounding countryside. "Where am I?" he yells with all of his might.

He is standing on the side of a mountain. The entire sky is pink and resembles a beautiful sunset, but the sun on the distant horizon is not yellow, but purple. There is a large, white moon visible in the east, a massive red planet in the center of the sky, and a giant orange planet in the western side of the sky. On the ground are many ponds of bubbling water. Some of the steamy hot water in the ponds is red, some ponds have purple water, and others have blue water. Without warning, about a mile away to the east, a huge explosion lights up the

sky and shakes the ground beneath his feet. He quickly turns to see the sight of red hot magma being blown thousands of feet into the air.

“What is going on?” he bellows, as he watches the volcano violently explode, and cautiously walks to his left and sits down on a rock that is embedded into the side of the mountain.

“Ouch!” a voice shrieks. Joe scurries to his feet as the rock grows four dog-like legs and proceeds to walk away down the side of the mountain. He hears another noise, and he rapidly glances to his left. About thirty feet away, the dirt on the mountainside begins to bubble like boiling water. Suddenly an opening appears in the side of the mountain and a huge bird emerges. It is the size of a large pterodactyl. Its head, beak, and legs are clear and see-through, and its body is covered with rainbow-colored stripes. The bird has glowing green eyes and is wearing a saddle, like a horse.

The gigantic bird looks at him and sighs with a high, screechy voice, “Welcome, Dream Wanderer! We don’t have much time! Please climb onto the saddle!”

Joe quickly hops onto the enormous rainbow-colored bird, and they race off into the pink sky.

Chapter 2

Meet Joe's Family

Joe's dad, Dave Blake, is a high school English teacher at Los Angeles High School. He is fifty-five years old, has dark hair, and stands well over six feet tall. He is very proud of his son Joe, who attended and graduated from Los Angeles High School with a 4.0 GPA, along with being the star quarterback for the high school. One of the happiest days in his life was when Joe was awarded a full-ride scholarship to play football with the UCLA Bruins. Dave has always been there for his family, and just as he loves to help his English students excel in academics, he pours all of his heart into helping his children achieve their dreams. He had discovered that Joe was a highly gifted athlete during Joe's elementary school years, and he spent hours each evening helping his son practice throwing a football. He is a handyman with tools, and he spends many hours fixing household appliances and coming to the aid of his neighbors who need dishwashers, dryers, or sinks fixed. Dave's greatest sense of fulfillment in life comes from helping others. He is also a very gifted musician and has played a guitar since he was a child.

Joe's mom, Susan, is a kindergarten teacher at Marcus Garvey Elementary School. She is very pretty and is almost the same height as Joe. She has blond hair and always has a warm

smile that symbolizes her relaxed and giving personality. Susan had known from her youth that she wanted to be a teacher, and her greatest achievement in life comes from helping her cute little kindergarten students learn how to read and write. Like her husband, she pours her life into helping her children excel, and she has always been very supportive of the many hours that Dave and Joe would spend honing Joe's incredible athletic talents.

Joe has two siblings, Mark and Annie. Joe's sister, Annie, is a precocious little first grader at Marcus Garvey Elementary School. She takes after her mom and has beautiful blond hair and a cute smile. She looks like a little doll, and she has a collection of dozens of dolls and several large dollhouses in her room. Her bed has Barbie sheets and pillow covers. She loves to sing and dance, and Susan sings with Annie every night as she tucks her into bed. Mark is a freshman at Los Angeles High School. He already towers at over six feet tall and has dark hair. He inherited his dad's musical abilities, and he spends many hours playing guitars and drums. Mark has always been very close to Joe, and although he is not as gifted as Joe athletically, they spend many hours throwing a football to each other.

The Blake family residence is located a block from a large park, so it is very easy for Joe to head down to the park and practice his football skills. The Blakes have a large double-story house with a two-car garage. Joe, Mark, and Annie all have

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bedrooms upstairs, while Dave and Susan have the largest bedroom located downstairs. Their house is very modernized. Dave and Joe added on a large recreation room that has a big screen T.V., a surround-sound system, two couches, and three very comfortable lounge chairs. They spend many quality hours in its confines watching football with their friends. Dave and Mark also built another soundproof room onto their house where they are able to play their musical equipment. Dave and Susan love trees and flowers, and they have a huge fenced-in yard that is encompassed by trees planted by Dave many years ago. Their large front and back yards have multiple flower gardens that Susan joyfully maintains. The Blakes also have a pool in their backyard. Joe loves to swim after his football games; it seems to relax him and allows him to fall asleep quicker.

The Blakes are a very close and gifted family, and on this brisk October day, Dave, Susan, Mark, and Annie have just made it home after watching Joe's football game at the UCLA stadium, followed by their usual excursion to the nearest ice cream parlor. As they pull into the driveway, they notice that Joe has not arrived home yet, which is very unusual. As Dave steps through the front door, he has a strong feeling that something has happened to his son, and he immediately notices that the answering machine by the kitchen table is flashing. He sprints to the machine and presses the flashing

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button, feeling that this might be a message that he does not want to hear.

Chapter 3

The Race to the Hospital

“This is Officer Johnson of the Los Angeles Police Department,” a somber voice echoes throughout the Blake’s house and continues, “I am sorry to have to be the one to tell you, but your son, Joe, has been involved in a car accident. I am at the scene of the wreck. We have pulled him from the wreckage, and he is being loaded into an ambulance and is to be taken to Los Angeles Community Hospital. Please get to the hospital as quickly as possible.”

There is silence in the Blake household for a short time after the message. Dave, Susan, Mark, and Annie all look at each other in absolute terror and then bolt out of the house and climb into their silver Suburban.

“Is Joe going to be okay?” little Annie questions as Dave rapidly has them heading towards the hospital.

“Your brother has always been a strong-willed fighter, and I know he will strive with all of his strength to live,” Susan answers through tears.

There is a gloomy silence in the car for the next fifteen minutes as Dave drives them to the hospital. He steers the car into the emergency room parking lot and parks in the closest open space to the door. They leap from the car and race into the emergency room. The emergency room is full of people

sitting in chairs who have burns, cuts, or broken bones. There is a nurse in the front of the room sitting behind a counter signing in patients. Dave sprints to the counter and cries out, "I am Dave Blake, and I have received a message that my son Joe has been in a car accident and is being taken here!"

The nurse, who is attractive and has long red hair, stands up and says, "Joe has been brought in and is in our intensive-care-unit. Please follow me. And by the way, my name is Mary."

As she leads them through the back door of the emergency room, Dave questions, "Do you know what happened?"

She replies, "A driver, intoxicated with alcohol, ran a red light and broadsided Joe at high speed. The entire right side of his car was crushed in, and they had to use the Jaws of Life to free him from the wreckage. He sustained a serious blow to his head and is in a coma."

"This can't be happening," Dave cries with tears now flowing out of his eyes. They can see an open doorway at the far end of the hall. Inside the room, many doctors are working on a patient who is lying on some type of a table. The Blakes can instantly sense that it is Joe. The doctors are very frantic, and Joe has some type of a large apparatus strapped to his face, with a long tube that is hooked into a big machine.

As they reach the intensive-care-unit, they see that there is a row of seven chairs on the right hand side of the hallway just outside of the room. Mary directs, "Please take a seat in these

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chairs. I know that this is going to be very hard for you, but please stay calm and rest assured that our doctors are doing everything that they can for him. I must return to the emergency room, and a doctor will come out shortly to talk to you.”

As Mary walks away, Annie, who is sitting to the right of her mom begins crying and sobs, “I want to see my brother!”

Susan wraps her right arm around her to comfort her, and as she continues to sob, all they can do is watch helplessly as the doctors work on him. The Blakes notice that, although he is unconscious, his arms and legs are making slight and sudden twitching movements.

Chapter 4

Saving Princess Joni

The large pterodactyl-like bird has landed at the base of a huge mountain. The jagged mountain reaches into the clouds and an eerie mist surrounds the base. Joe dismounts from the enormous bird and gazes at the monstrous mountain. The bird smiles and says, "Dream Wanderer, I have done all that I can for you. The only person who can help you now is Princess Joni. Unfortunately, she has been captured by the evil Muglids and is being held deep within the bowels of this evil mountain. You must rescue her! Stand back!"

Joe steps backwards as the glowing green eyes of the bird begin to radiate an intense light. The vivid green light blasts out of the bird's eyes like a laser and into the base of the mountain. A large green explosion knocks him backwards onto the ground. He picks himself up and peers through the hazy mist and sees an opening in the mountain. He looks at the bird, nods thank you, and walks to the opening and enters it.

He has been considering that this must be a strange dream that he is trapped in, but he can feel the cold and misty air biting into his skin, and earlier, he could sense the heat coming from the exploding volcano. Also, as he enters the mountain, he can sense the presence of death and evil, and he is gripped

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with terror. He can't determine if this is reality or merely a dream.

He is now walking in a system of caves. A dim red light allows him to see. He has the sword out of its sheath and in his right hand. As he edges around a corner, he begins to hear loud drum beats. He uses the sound of the drums to guide him through the caves. He begins to see a bright red light and a large opening ahead of him. He sprints to the opening and peers in. He must be in the center of the mountain. The cave-like tunnels have led him to an extensive chamber which must be almost a half mile long. He is about twenty feet above the ground, and a ladder allows him to climb from the opening in the wall to the floor. There are gigantic stalagmites covering the ground as far as he can see. They are hundreds of feet tall and some of them are over fifteen feet wide. They cover the ground like trees in a dense forest, and he will have to navigate between them to reach the sound of the loud blaring drums emanating from the center of the chamber. Looking up, he sees the ceiling of the massive cave is covered with hanging stalactites. The roof of the chamber is hundreds of feet tall, and some of the stalactites reach from the ceiling to the ground.

Without warning, the ground begins to shake. He watches in terror as the tips of many stalagmites and stalactites begin to turn fiery red and explode into burning balls of red flame that fly like dancing fireflies throughout the cave. He dives to

the ground and rolls out of the way as one of the red fire balls almost hits him.

“This is crazy!” the young college quarterback hollers as he springs to his feet and begins to quickly make his way towards the center of the chamber where the loud drums are being pounded over and over.

As he reaches the center of the gigantic cave, he begins to hear horrid growling noises. The hairs on his arms and legs begin to rise in fear. He sees a clearing ahead where there are no stalagmites present. As he reaches the edge of the clearing he smells a putrid odor. Then he spots the monsters. A hundred yards in front of him is a group of about thirty evil creatures with monstrous ape-like bodies, dragon-like skin, long cone-shaped heads, shark-like razor sharp teeth, and long sharp claws. The creatures are an astounding ten feet tall. They are growling and hissing, and in the center of their circular army is a beautiful woman. The woman is Asian, has long black hair, is well over five feet tall, and is wearing a lovely red dress and a diamond necklace. This gorgeous lady must be Princess Joni, he thinks. Two of the evil monsters are standing next to the princess and are pounding drums. It appears that the creatures are preparing to eat her.

Joe begins to burn with anger, and with his sword in his hands, he releases a tremendous yell and starts charging towards the creatures. The monsters instantly make loud

shrieks and turn to face the charging quarterback. They leap forward at him like lions springing for their prey, but he uses his nimble agility to dodge the creatures as they try to bite and claw him. He is very skillful, and as the monsters leap at him, he quickly springs out of the way and strikes them with his sword, slicing off the beasts' heads. He slays all of the evil creatures. He then approaches the now free princess.

She has a heart-melting smile and is about to speak, but the ground violently shakes and knocks them down. An opening appears in the ground forty feet in front of them, and a huge beast leaps from the opening. The enormous creature is over fifty feet tall. Its ape-like body and cone shaped head are covered with dragon-like skin. It opens its mouth and displays teeth that are longer than Joe's sword. The monster roars and then blows a red flame at Joe and the princess, who dive out of the way, just narrowly missing being scorched.

The fiery princess directs, "I will divert the monster while you try and get it." She then looks at the beast and shouts, "Come and get me!" The creature races towards her swiping its large claws. But she is very agile, like a gymnast, and she quickly jumps and rolls out of the way.

Joe races towards the beast, and he lunges his sword into the creature's leg. As he twists the sword around, the creature screams in agony. The beast then smashes its large paws into the ground directly in front of him, nearly maiming him, but he

leaps onto the monster's right paw and plunges in his sword. It roars in pain and raises its right arm and Joe towards its mouth, so it can devour him. Just as it is going to consume him, the princess drives a jagged piece of broken stalagmite into its foot. As the beast screams because of the pain and looks down, Joe leaps from the monster's hand and plunges his sword into the creature's right eye. It growls and falls to the ground, and Joe rapidly plunges his sword into the beast's cone shaped forehead. It hisses and twitches for a moment, but then becomes motionless.

"Yeah!" Joe hollers. The beautiful princess also screams in excitement, as he hops off the monster's face and gives her a hug.

"Thank you so much for saving me!" Princess Joni exclaims with her heart-melting smile now brighter than ever. As they eagerly make their way out of the evil mountain, the princess explains to him how he has become the Dream Wanderer. He is trapped in a dream world, and he only has four days to reach a portal that will allow him to leave the dream world and wake up. If he does not reach the portal, he will die. As they exit the mountain, she explains that he must reach Robot City and find Bouncer, who is the only one who knows where the portal is located. She points him in the direction of Robot City.

Before she climbs onto the large rainbow-colored bird, who has been patently waiting for her, he kneels down, kisses

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her right hand and says, “My fair lady, I want to thank you and express the gratitude that radiates from the deepest depths of my heart! May your beauty, brilliance, and cunning leadership allow you to rule your kingdom forever and ever. Before my journey ends, I hope that we will meet again!”

She waves goodbye as the large bird takes off, and they disappear into the luminous pink sky. He turns himself in the direction of Robot City and begins to run.