

DREAM OF DREAMS

THE PROPHECY BEGINS



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DREAM OF DREAMS: THE PROPHECY BEGINS

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CHAPTER 1

Tzuri's Awakening

Under the vast dome of a late afternoon sky, long ribbons of golden sunlight poured over the undulating fields, bathing the earth in a lingering warmth that seemed to hum with ancient life. The heavens unfurled like a sacred scroll, painted with streaks of molten gold against an azure expanse as if the divine hand of creation itself had brushed across the firmament. A tender breeze sighed through the grasses, offering a fleeting respite to a young man whose brow glistened with the toil of the day. As he lifted a calloused hand to wipe the sweat from his face, the grit of the earth clung to his skin, a silent testament to his labor. The air bore the deep loamy scent of freshly turned soil, woven with the delicate perfume of wildflowers that danced lazily in the wind as though whispering secrets of the unseen realms.

Nearby stood his father, John, a figure carved from the very stone of endurance, silhouetted against the radiant sky. John's visage, etched with the furrows of countless seasons, softened as he gazed upon his son with eyes that held both weariness and a quiet, unyielding pride. A spark of joy flickered within those weathered depths, illuminating the bond between them. Tzuri secured his wooden training sword at his belt, its familiar weight a constant reminder of the endless hours spent honing his skill under his father's vigilant watch.

John's voice, roughened by years of toil and authority, broke the stillness with a gruff warmth.

"You're growing swifter with each passing day. Soon, you'll surpass even me, my son."

Tzuri's lips curved into a faint smile, though his heart wandered elsewhere, restless as a hawk soaring the open sky. His gaze drifted beyond his father to the boundless fields that rolled out like a verdant sea, cloaking their humble farm in an emerald embrace. A quiet determination, tinged with the bright hope of youth, colored his words as he replied,

"Thank you, Father. I remain ever your pupil."

The ache in his sinews pulsed steadily, a lingering echo of the day's burdens. He spent his day hauling heavy sacks of feed, mending fences, and striking with his blade beneath the unyielding sun.

Though his body bore the weight of exhaustion, a restless energy stirred within Tzuri's spirit, a yearning that tugged him toward a destiny yet veiled. Standing amidst the fields, he felt a profound tether to the land, a gratitude for the sacred rhythm of their labor. Yet an insatiable longing for the unknown, for the promise beyond the horizon, burned fiercely within him, for home was all he had ever known. It was as though the earth itself whispered of a greater purpose.

John, sensing the unrest in his son's heart, inclined his head with a knowing gesture, brief yet laden with understanding.

"Well, go on then."

Needing no further urging, Tzuri set out across the fields, his footsteps light upon the tall, swaying grasses, each stride drawing him nearer to a stillness he craved, a communion with the eternal.

Reaching a secluded spot, he lowered himself to the earth, lying upon his back with arms outstretched as if to embrace the boundless heavens. The sky engulfed him, an infinite tapestry that seemed to shimmer with the breath of the divine. Closing his eyes, Tzuri surrendered his mind to visions beyond the mortal plane as his words formed a sacred murmur from the depths of his being. He spoke them softly to the heavens:

“My true love’s kiss shall be as endless as the stars.

*Time no longer exists as I lay here by the gentle stream, gazing into the beautiful
heavens.*

My footsteps wander through the beauty of fields unseen,

following my heart to my dream of dreams.

No set of wings or mountains can deter the fates of love.

Love cannot be searched; it shall find you when it sings to you what has never been sung.”

The breeze bore his voice aloft, as though the heavens themselves inclined to listen. Though uncertainty shadowed his path, Tzuri’s heart pulsed with the certainty that destiny was unfurling its scroll before him. His final whispered words cradled him into slumber as the recurring dream of his mysterious companion, present since childhood, wove its silken thread through his mind.

He found himself there again, standing at the threshold of a realm pulsating with unseen vitality. Tzuri lingered at the edge of a dense jungle, its emerald depths stretching endlessly behind him. The air hung heavy and still, saturated with moisture that adhered to his skin like a gossamer veil. A potent aroma enveloped him with a blend of damp earth, rotting timber, and the cloying sweetness of overripe fruit mingling in a musky primal embrace. Above him, a towering canopy arched like the vault of a sacred temple, filtering the waning light of day into fragmented beams.

All around, a restless symphony resounded through the verdant cathedral. The incessant chirring of cicadas wove through the air, joined by the distant whooping calls of monkeys and the eerie cries of birds singing so otherworldly they seemed to echo from realms beyond mortal ken. Somewhere within the tangled growth, the faint trickle of water whispered secrets of unseen streams. Tzuri pressed forward, the ground yielding beneath his bare feet, soft and alive with layers of leaf litter, gnarled roots, and fleeting glimpses of tiny creatures darting through the underbrush.

Vines cascaded from colossal trees, sinews of ancient giants. They wrapped kapok and fig trunks in bonds that seemed eternal, unbreakable. Broad-leaved plants unfurled with a prehistoric majesty, some adorned with blossoms that breathed forth a sweetness so intoxicating it seemed to draw the soul itself.

A sudden rustling stirred his senses, and through a narrow breach in the foliage, his eyes caught the faint outline of a bamboo bridge. It spanned a shallow ravine, swaying gently as though moved by the breath of the jungle itself, its fibrous cords lashed tight and its surface worn smooth by the passage of time or the touch of countless unseen travelers.

With measured steps, he approached, each step placed with the reverence of one treading sacred ground. The bridge groaned beneath his weight, and the jungle seemed to hush in solemn observance as he crossed. On the far side, a barrier of oversized leaves loomed before him, their surfaces heavy with dew and gleaming like polished jade in the dim light.

He extended a trembling hand and parted the verdant curtain as one might unveil a long, hidden truth. In that moment, the world unfurled in breathtaking splendor.

A golden shore stretched toward the horizon, where a vast river of white and black waters met with a twilight sky set ablaze with fiery hues of orange. The river's surface shimmered, as if caught in a dream of its own making, reflecting the eternal dance of light and shadow.

And there she stood, bathed in the glow of twilight, motionless, seemingly waiting. Slowly, without a word, he began to walk toward her. He knew this moment; he had dreamed it many times before. Since childhood, the dream had returned to him, and each time he found her here. As the years passed and he grew taller, she too seemed to grow, her features maturing in step with his own, as though the dream itself remembered his age.

A woman of enigma, poised by the water's edge. Her white garment flowed about her like the auroras of the northern heavens stirred by a gentle wind. Her presence was otherworldly, a beacon of light amidst the mundane, her long, black hair swaying with a serenity that seemed to define peace itself.

A whisper escaped his lips, laden with both caution and yearning.

“Who are you?”

His steps toward her were tentative yet eager, the damp sand yielding beneath his feet as the gentle waves kissed the shore, each stride heavy with urgency, as though time itself conspired to keep them apart.

As he reached out with a trembling hand, the air grew thick with anticipation, a sacred tension that seemed to hum with the pulse of creation.

“Please, turn to me.”

His plea was soft, nearly lost to the wind’s mournful sigh. Yet, as his fingers neared her shoulder, the mysterious figure dissolved like mist before the dawn, vanishing into the sunset’s embrace. No trace remained, as if she had been but a phantom woven from the fading light.

Tzuri let his hand fall, fingers brushing the void where she once stood. The warmth of her presence lingered like a brief melody. Closing his eyes and bowing his head, he let the tide lap at his feet, feeling the cool and grounding water. He thought to himself: in the tally of his days, there had not been a single dream that held her face. However, where his dream usually ended, something strange occurred.

As he lifted his head and opened his eyes, a sudden brilliance erupted from above, a radiant burst that forced Tzuri to stagger back, shielding his eyes from its searing purity. As the light dimmed, he lowered his hands to behold a woman descending from the heavens, cloaked in a luminance so divine that her visage remained obscured. Her aura pulsed with ancient wisdom and power, resonating deep within him, stirring both awe and a strange comforting peace, as though she were a guardian angel.

Her voice, melodious as a celestial harp, pierced the silence with words of prophecy.

“Hero of Hysco, thy time is nigh. The four portals have been opened, and darkness spreads its roots. You must seal them and restore the four spiritual rubies of virtue. Awake now and fulfill thy destiny.”

The proclamation rang in his ears like a temple bell, reverberating through his very soul. Before he could form a response, Tzuri awoke with a gasp, his chest heaving as though he had run across the vast plains of Hysco. Sweat drenched his skin, and the vision clung to his mind, vivid and throbbing with portent. The celestial voice echoed within him, a summons he could not dismiss.

“Hero of Hysco, thy time is nigh...”

He dragged a hand across his face, exhaling with a shudder, seeking to anchor himself in the waking world. It was merely a dream, he assured himself, a fleeting illusion. Yet, a whisper stirred the air, soft and distant, like the rustling of sacred leaves in a forgotten grove. Tzuri froze, his heart thundering in his chest. It was not the wind. It was a voice, calling his name in a ghostly murmur.

“Tzuri...”

His eyes swept the golden fields, searching the swaying grasses for any sign of life. Nothing stirred, save for the whisper rising and falling like a sigh borne on the breeze. Turning toward the horizon, where a small grove nestled near a murmuring stream, the call grew stronger, curling around his ears like the breath of an unseen spirit.

“Come...”

The summons tugged at him, an inexorable force urging him onward as though guided by the hand of fate itself. His steps faltered at first, uncertain, yet each one grew firmer drawn by the urgency woven into the whisper. The call seemed devoid of malice, bearing only a pressing need. He felt as though his feet did not move of their own accord, carrying him through the tall grass toward the stream's edge where the whispers abruptly ceased, leaving only the gentle murmur of flowing water.

With his pulse hammering like war drums in his ears, Tzuri scanned the surroundings, half expecting a presence to emerge from the fields. Yet, the fields remained empty, silent. Why had the whispers led him here? His gaze wandered, seeking answers in the vast emptiness until it settled upon a lake in the distance, its glassy glistening surface mirroring the celestial blue above. A deep, unnameable pull stirred within his chest, urging him toward its shores.

He approached with strides fueled by a mix of confusion and disbelief, the heat of unanswered questions clinging to his skin. Kneeling at the water's edge, he cupped the cool liquid in his hands, splashing it upon his face to quell the storm within. Then, shedding his tunic, he leaned forward, immersing himself in the lake's embrace, the cold shock rippling through him like a cleansing rite. His reflection fractured beneath the surface, a mirror to the tempest of thoughts swirling in his mind.

A sharp exhalation escaped him as he pondered whether the chill might clear the fog of his vision. For a fleeting moment, peace reigned. Then, a flicker beneath the water caught his eye. A faint pulsing glow, as if a fragment of starlight had fallen into the depths. His breath hitched. Something was there, hidden in the lake's sacred heart. Without hesitation, he plunged beneath the surface.

In the murky depths of the muddy bed, a handle rested, cloaked in sediment yet aglow with a faint, otherworldly light. Tzuri, with reverence trembling in his hands, grasped its form and pulled, yet it yielded not, bound by unseen chains of the earth. Breaking the water's surface, his breath ragged with awe, he gazed upon the mystery below, his voice a whisper carried on the wind.

"What is this?"

He emerged from the waters and hastened to the barn, his heart a drum of wonder, not weariness. With rope in hand, he returned to the depths, binding the handle with resolute purpose before tethering the other end to his steed's saddle. A gentle touch upon the beast's neck, a bond of trust unspoken, and his plea rose like a prayer to the open sky.

"Come on, boy! Pull!"

The horse neighed, muscles straining as it heaved forward, the rope tautening under the burden. For a tense moment, it seemed the effort would be in vain. Then, with a sudden lurch, the handle broke free from its watery prison, the sound of scraping metal echoing across the valley like a herald's cry. The horse stumbled back, regaining its footing with a determined snort.

Tzuri's eyes widened in astonishment at what emerged from the lake. It appeared to be a chest, begrimed by earth's ancient secrets, its metal edges glinting in the sunlight, a relic forgotten in time and pulled from the depths. It stood before him like a monument from an ancient time, defying belief.

“Treasure!”

Crouching beside the chest, he strained against its weight, breath coming in ragged bursts of exhaustion and anticipation. Even with the horse’s aid, the chest clung to the mud like a lost anchor. Yet, Tzuri pressed on, driven by the certainty that answers lay within. With a final, mighty heave, he righted it, pausing to catch his breath, hands braced on his knees.

Re-securing the rope to the horse, he gave a gentle tug on the rope, encouraging Bogai to move. Though the added burden caused a momentary stagger, the horse soon steadied, earning a reassuring pat on its flank. Leading the way to the barn, Tzuri’s mind raced with possibilities, each more fantastical than the last.

Upon reaching the barn, he found his father at his workbench, meticulously repairing a tool under the warm, flickering light of an old candle suspended from a beam. The scent of hay and the soft creaks of the weathered structure enveloped them in a cocoon of familiarity and safety. Tzuri’s voice shattered the quiet, echoing with unrestrained excitement.

“Father, come quickly. See what I have found!”

John turned slowly, his expression inscrutable as he watched his son untie the chest from the horse. The chest was streaked with mud and dripping with water. For a suspended moment, father and son stood in reverent silence, their gazes locked on the enigmatic find, the only sounds their measured breaths and the distant calls of evening birds.

Breaking the stillness, John spoke, his voice calm yet threaded with curiosity and a hint of concern.

“From what depths have you brought this relic?”

Tzuri’s excitement bubbled forth, barely contained.

“In the lake, Father. It pulsed with an unearthly light. I had to remove it with the horse’s strength.”

John’s eyes narrowed in contemplation, his movements deliberate as he set aside his tool and approached the chest. Sunlight streaming through the barn’s entrance illuminated the deep lines of worry and intrigue upon his face. Reaching out, he traced the surface, feeling the cold dampness of the lake still clinging to its ancient metal.

His gaze sharpened, and he gestured for caution.

“Stand back, my son.”

Tzuri obeyed, a profound weight settled upon his heart, heavy as a millstone carved from the mountains of old. John traced his weathered hand along the chest’s edge, brushing away the silt and grime of countless ages until the metal beneath shimmered faintly under the flickering candlelight. Yet no lock revealed itself, no latch, no hidden groove, nor any seam by which the chest might surrender its secrets.

John pressed against the lid with determined strength, pulling at its edges, pushing with all his might, and even striking the frame with the heel of his hand. Still, it remained unyielding, steadfast as the gates of a forbidden citadel. A shadow passed

over his stern visage, and Tzuri, watching closely, beheld for the first time a flicker of uncertainty in his father's resolute eyes, a crack in the armor of a man who had faced tempests and trials without falter.

Tzuri stood ensnared by a subtle gleam, a whisper of light tracing faint markings along the rim of ancient stone. His heart thrummed with the pulse of unseen forces, as though the sacred geography of this place, veiled in the dust of eons, murmured his name in tones of eternal knowing. Drawn closer by a power beyond mortal ken, he gazed upon the stirring signs of hidden life, and in a voice trembling with reverence, Tzuri spoke.

"Father, an inscription, and it begins to glow. Shall we decipher its meaning?"

John turned his sharp gaze to the surface, his brow knitting in confusion.

"Tzuri, what do you speak of? There is no mark upon this chest. It is as blank and smooth as a door forged of unblemished iron."

Yet to Tzuri, the words burned with clarity, etched in fire upon the metal, as though kindled by a divine hand. Drawn nearer, he spoke the strange syllables aloud, his voice low yet resonant, echoing in the still air of the barn. Each word bore an ancient and unyielding weight, as if drawn from the bedrock of another age.

Below the rim, ancient words emerged, glowing with the light of prophecy, a testament to the hidden truths of the world:

"For it is written:

These things saith he that is holy, he that is true,

*he that bath the key of David,
he that openeth, and no man shutteth;
and shutteth, and no man openeth.”*

Beneath this, in smaller, fainter script, an instruction shimmered into being, a command from the unseen realms:

“Lay thy hands upon the vessel and speak for it is written: Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

The letters pulsed with a rhythm akin to a heartbeat, as though they recognized Tzuri, as though they had awaited his touch since the forging of the stars. With trembling reverence, he stepped forward, his palms pressing against the cold, unyielding metal, feeling the chill of ages seep into his flesh.

Drawing a deep breath, as if inhaling the very spirit of the sacred words, Tzuri uttered the hallowed words:

“Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

A faint hum arose from the depths of the chest, a sound like the distant chant of celestial choirs, vibrating through his arms and resonating within his very bones. The fine hairs upon his skin stood erect, as if the atmosphere itself crackled with the breath of life, charged with the presence of the divine. The ancient vessel crumbled to dust before their eyes, its form dissolving as though the breath of eternity had reclaimed it. Tzuri’s breath caught in his throat, his eyes widening in awe at the revelation unveiled

from the ancient vessel. It gleamed with a resplendent hue, a Seraphim White, golden and luminous, pure as the robes of angels woven from the light of the first dawn.

John's voice emerged as a mere whisper, barely audible above the pounding of his heart.

"Lord, can this be true..."

John's countenance paled, and he moved to close the barn door, sealing them within the dim sanctuary. His expression darkened with a gravity Tzuri had seldom seen.

"Tzuri, heed my words with care."

He lowered himself to a nearby stool, staring at the object as though it summoned a revelation long interred in the crypts of time.

A strange amalgam of dread and wonder coursed through Tzuri, quickening his pulse.

"Father, what is it?"

John lifted his gaze to meet Tzuri's eyes.

"Come, Tzuri. Sit."

Questions swirled in Tzuri's mind, but he said nothing. Slowly, he moved to the nearby stool, the old wood creaking beneath him as he settled into its worn frame. John folded his hands in his lap. For a breath, he looked not at Tzuri, but at the flickering candle, its flame swaying gently as if stirred by memory. He watched it for a

long moment, as though seeking the right thread of truth within its light. Finally, he spoke.

*“There are stories far beyond our imagination, beyond our realities as we see them.
What you are about to hear is one I have kept entombed for far too long.”*

In the sacred stillness of their humble barn, the threads of destiny began to weave a tapestry, one that would shape the course of Tzuri’s life and echo through the ages to come.