

The winds whoosh and spirits dance about in the air saying, *“We seek refuge with conquering thoughts. For us to find a place that we might dwell!*

Live and breathe by single darkened choice. Only to be found amongst the free will of a soul within the entrance of the minds of man.”

The black hooves thrash through bright yellow grass glistening in the light of the sun. It is autumn, and the cool air is felt beneath the armor of men. They ride with their king.

Prince Liam rides by his father’s side. It is not the sound of the onslaught of the enemy-this doth not bother him-but something stirs within.

A single thought causes Liam to see. *“It is not his purpose to kill anymore.”* War doth not seem to be a part of who he now is. Agreeing with his thought that tells him, *“Perhaps, truly there is a better way.”* He decides to find out!

Although well-trained for battle, an inner voice of light continues. Hearing it over and over, it tells him, *“This is not the direction of his destiny.”*

Just before the king’s army engages in combat, Liam finally hears it out loud ‘til it becomes a shout of his own. “Father, I take leave!” Liam then breaks from the ranks turning back.

Other thoughts, dragons invade his mind as he turns: *“Where are you going? The men need your leadership.”* He rides on. *“You’ll never be able to face your father. Some may die because of this selfish choice,”* and then an overwhelming

thought, as a final resounding blow, attempts to invade his mind:
“They’ll call you a coward!”

Unmoved, Liam continues to ride away. He has been in battles before. The stories and glories of war have been drummed into his head since youth. Yet, have they become a sound that would drown out all other growth from his life as well?

There was an incomplete image in his mind. A missing thread or two as it were, which kept him from seeing the whole design of the pattern. Or, are the other threads that now have his focus an even more vital part of the design than he had once thought? Threads that were needed to support the fabric of all reality fully?

Nervously, Liam wipes the sweat from his brow as he lets loose on the reins. His horse begins to trot. Just as he leaves the lines, while making peace with his decision, he feels a burning sensation.

Struck by an arrow, Prince Liam experiences a deep penetrating pain and begins to fall from the side of his horse.

Haugh! I abruptly awake and find myself sitting up, taking quick, heavy breaths. My room slowly comes in sight, and as I adjust to my usual surroundings, my focus starts to shift.

“This has been the third time I have had this dream.”

I am no stranger to battle, but the thought of not being able to fight against this nightmare has been most Disturbing.

Slipping out of bed, my feet touch the damp, sobering floor. I go to the window and have a look, trying to change the mood I'm in.

It is early in the morn and the stars still hang, piercing the veil of a dark night sky. The smooth stones beneath my feet have now become uncomfortably wet.

Upon drying them, I put on some boots and venture out of my chamber to dimly torch-lit corridors.

Haunted by my dream, I make my way to my Brother Edward's room and knock upon his door.

While I wait, I wonder if I'm doing the right thing in coming to him. But I must confess that he is the more stable of the two of us these days.

Our father's unpredictable behavior has grown increasingly worse. Being the eldest, I have taken the brunt of it - which has been most draining.

I go to knock a second time and Edward opens suddenly. I jump back with surprise, which surprises him. Now, we are both very much awake.

Edward finds me holding my right hand in a loose fist up to my heart. My breaths are yet heavy, and I'm now slouched in a slightly forward position.

"Liam, is everything all right?"

I ponder my thoughts and answer what is told me,
"Yes—I'm not so sure?"

"You'd better come in."

We sit down on his bed, and then I tell him of my dream.
“Have you told this to anyone else?”

“Nowhere else to go since the priests have gone. Father taking up that cup, drinking ‘til his eyes are red, and now...”

“He has become a wild animal lately, hasn’t he? And I know peace has been difficult to find, Liam. Especially with his unruly fits and uncontrollable rage!”

“Before the priests left, I am under impression they thought he had an evil spirit.”

“Now the deeper the pit, the longer the Great One’s arm is able to reach into it!”

“Well spoken, Edward. We must be aware of harboring resentments during these times...or things might...get rather confusing?”

There is a long pause before my brother’s reply, which leads me to believe he keeps a secret. Edward continues, “I heard the priests are in waiting, praying day and night for the appointed time of the deliverer.”

“Who is this deliverer to be?”

“Father’s drinking has really gotten to you, my poor brother.”

Believing he may have offended me, Edward pauses. After he sees I do not react, my brother feels compelled to continue.

“I think he’s gotten to us all, Liam. No one can get very close to him anymore.”

“Tell me more of our deliverer; I need to hear it, particularly at times like these.”

“Well, no one knows when He is to come, but my hope is...at the appointed time, he’ll bring back purity to the people and restore the kingdom with His wise words and actions.”

“Boy, I’d sure like to meet him. Why, I’d even settle for a priest right now just to find out what my dream means.”

“The fact you are next in line for the throne, having had the exact same dream three times in a row. This could mean...the Great One is not only trying to speak to you, but have a message for all our people. I will break my silence. I believe our queen and mother knows where the priests are.”

“Now, how do you know all this and I do not?”

“I happened by at the time of their departure, overhearing bits and pieces of conversation from the priests of the Order.

Where they’re staying, I do not know, but I did hear she could send them prayer requests and something about taking courage. For the Great One is able to see you through all adversity. Work all things out for the good of those who love Him, and to take heart for they’d be praying for her.”

“I wish I could have been there. If only there was something I could have done to stop this!”

“Like what? You know it is not your time to rule... sad, but true.”

The birds begin to chirp out in the garden. Edward suddenly comes to the realization, “Hey, it’ll be morn soon!”

Then I realize it too, as we say together. “Mother always prays at the dais at sunrise!”

“I will go to her, tell her of my quest, and find out the meaning of my dream!”

“Don’t forget to dress first and let me know what happens!”

I take leave of my brother with great excitement. My heart soars as my thoughts begin to race. The reality of what is happening starts to move me while sinking in.

“I know I must be calm to see clearly. As there is no telling what will unfold before me. ‘Do I go back to sleep? No, I’ll only bounce out of bed.’ Let me get dressed for travel and go to meet mother in prayer at morn.”

It is still before sunrise. All is quiet, as a fine summer’s haze fills the night air, signifying yet another uncomfortably humid day to come on the morrow. I pause momentarily by the frog pond in the courtyard as the moon shines down upon the water amongst its lilies.