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TRUE WORLD

AZYRA

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DREAMS COME TRUE

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DREAMS & NIGHTMARES



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ACT I  
THE BOYE

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Quamdiu cor meum palpitat, amorem desidero.

As long as my heart beats, I crave love.

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# CHAPTER I

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

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Being alive and being happy do not always come together.

SCENE I  
MORNING WOOD

Real beauty often lies hidden in plain sight.



Fine rays of sunlight break gently through the branches of the trees. Without dazzling, they provide warmth and brightness. They carefully feel their way through the canopy of leaves and reach out greedily for anything they can reach. With careful touches, they caress the leaves, grasses and branches of the forest, which seem to happily give way and awaken from the cool calm of the night. They rustle excitedly in the pleasant breeze of the morning air. The branches and trunks of the trees also creak and crack soothingly. They are harmoniously joined by the gentle rustling of the wind, which blows here and there through the undergrowth.

To the calming melody of the forest, fine particles of light dance in the morning sun while the wafting remnants of the night mist slowly evaporate in the forest shadow. They leave their cool wetness full of innocence in the form of fine water droplets on the numerous plants and grasses. The sunlight makes the isolated pearls of dew glisten like sparkling diamonds as they sway gently back and forth in the calm current of the air.

Cheerful birdsong slowly joins the sounds of the forest. The feathered singers soften the stillness of the night with their warbling and even the very youngest set off on their day's work. On leaves and grasses, almost invisible to the naked eye, they move as if in a trance. With a quiet, barely perceptible, beguiling hum, they perform their dance in the light of the sun. With a quiet hum, the fluffy-looking bees and bumblebees set themselves in motion to diligently collect nectar and distribute pollen. They settle on the scattered flowers that bloom on the forest floor, decorating it with their colorful splashes. Here and there, butterflies can be seen shimmering in the refracted light of the sun's rays, flapping their wings calmly through the air.

In a bright area in the distance, deep in the middle of the forest, deer can be spotted with careful eyes. Curious and tired from the night, they blink and check their surroundings. Slowly, more deer heads emerge from the tall grass. While some of them lie down again, some rise gracefully and look around

cautiously. Everything is quiet and the deer become calm. They lower their heads to pluck the fresh grass and chew it tastily.

Joy spreads deep inside to be in the midst of this paradisiacal birth. To contemplate the play of colors that the sun's artistic painting traces on the canvas of the forest. To experience life as it unfolds before your patient eyes. While the sun's rays massage the skin with soothing warmth, the air ensnares you with the soft coolness of the night.

The snapshot of the numerous old trees, which tower powerfully into the sky and sway gently in the lullaby of the wind, while providing shade for the smaller plants, has a sublime effect. Their roots have been penetrating the damp soil for decades and sometimes even centuries, providing shelter and protection for all the life under their canopies of leaves. In harmony with nature, the soul is filled with contentment with every breath of pure morning air.

Everything slips away at the sight of nature and the life awakening within it.

SCENE II  
AWAKENING

Dreams are there to guide you, not suit you.

Slowly but steadily, the soundscape changes from the sound of the forest and the life in it to the laughter and bickering of children playing, ensuring a pleasant awakening. A boy's eyes blink open. He is lying on his back in the moss-covered grass, surrounded by bushes and trees. His gaze is directed towards the bright blue sky.

It takes a moment for his vision to adjust to the brightness of the midday sun. Here and there, scattered clouds drift slowly overhead. The green sea of leaves seems to stretch out enviously towards the passing white veils of warmth. The countless leaves seem so calm, as if they are waiting. Only now and then are they gently swayed back and forth by a cool breeze in the far too warm midday air. The melodic chirping of birds sounds soothing, while the sounds of school disappear in the background.

Amidst the birdsong and greenery, framed by the bushes and under the protective canopy of the trees, there is a feeling of security. A butterfly rests on one of the leaves next to him and bathes in the pleasantly warm glow of the sun, which falls on it through the branches. Its white wings shimmer gracefully, reminiscent of the many tiny butterflies from the morning dream. Suddenly, it takes off with gentle strokes. On its way into the sky, it first seems to merge with the dazzling brightness of the sun and finally disappears completely.

Little by little, leaves rustle and branches snap. Behind him, the boy suddenly hears a familiar voice.

“Hey, you dreamer!”

Astonished, he looks around and recognizes the face of a classmate. He smiles triumphantly at the boy with his bright blue eyes.

“So here you are”,

he states proudly as he approaches the boy through the bushes. His black hair hangs wild and loose over his tanned face, which is adorned with a few freckles. Smiling, he looks down at the boy from above, his arms resting loosely on his hips. The boy knows him well and the cozy feeling of midday calm gives way to an overwhelming unease.

“Thought you'd get away?”,

the intruder asks gruffly with a broad grin, while his ice-blue eyes fix on the boy. From his athletic, slim appearance, he could be a model or a famous singer. There is another crash in the bushes behind him and two more boys emerge from them, looking impressive. One is slightly taller, more muscular and has a shaved head. The second man is bulky, with a dark complexion and brownish curly hair. The two of them position themselves to the left and right of the model. With a few slow steps, they approach the boy, whose heart begins to beat faster. As they surround him and come to a halt next to him, the pulsating hammering swallows up all the sounds of the surroundings. He is afraid.

“What are you doing lying there lazily while I talk to you?”

the pretty boy asks more sharply and jabs his foot hard into his right side. The sudden pain makes the boy flinch and he reflexively grabs his ribs. His heart pounds wildly and drives the loudly pulsating blood through his body.

“Give. Me. Your. Your. food!”,

the pretty boy orders in an unnecessarily slow command tone. The boy's thoughts race and panic spreads. His gaze is directed downwards to the grass as fear paralyzes him.

“Answer me when you're asked!”

one of the newcomers hisses at him as another kick to the other side of the ribs empties the boy's lungs like a stitch and takes his breath away.

“HHhhHH!”

he groans without really getting a sound out. His vision blurs as he gasps for air in panic and writhes in pain on the hard grassy ground. His fear swells like the pounding of blood and he feels like he is suffocating in agony. Tears trickle down his cheeks from his closed eyes. Only the muffled laughter of his three tormentors reaches him from outside. Black emptiness spreads behind his closed optic nerves. A multitude of bright flashes of pain roar through him like thunderstorms before his inner eye. Panting, he continues to gasp for air as he convulses and struggles on the ground. The feeling of dying floods his consciousness until he notices a warmth in his groin. In the background, he hears the boys laughing maliciously. He feels his heart racing and pounding wildly. Tasting salty wetness on his lip, he registers how his hands protectively grasp his aching ribs and stomach. The pain subsides a little as oxygen flows through his lungs again.

His wild heartbeat slowly calms down and his breathing becomes regular. When he feels the grass on his hands as he lies on the ground, he tries to open his eyes, which are clogged with tears. The green blurs briefly with the blue of the sky until he makes out the silhouettes of the three darkly in the light of the sun in front of him.

“Do you want seconds?”

the pretty boy asks in a mocking voice. But the warning is an irritant. The boy tries with all his might to fight the paralyzing fear and pain. He pushes himself off the ground with both hands to get up from the grass and reach for the bag next to him. Gritting his teeth, he pulls himself to his feet, kneels down by his bag and rummages for the food box. Slowly he catches his breath and the throbbing calms down as he holds the food box in his

hands. He looks up briefly at his tormentors, gazing into their faces. But shame and fear force him to turn away. His eyes stare at the ground, his hands reach the food box forward into the air. The fear of the unknown and further beatings leaves him petrified, fervently hoping that the agonizing event will simply end.

“There you go.”

the brunette's voice breaks the silence, making the boy flinch briefly. Laughing loudly, they gloat and make fun of him and how pathetic he is as they move out of the bushes and away.

The boy slumps down powerlessly. More tears spill from his eyes. Whimpering softly, he crouches down in the cool grass in the fetal position. He tastes the salt as he clenches his teeth tightly. Helpless and full of rage, his body tenses up and a long, shrill cry for help whips through the silence in his mind until he lies motionless, exhausted. He doesn't notice anything, not even the cawing of the birds around him as they fly into the blue sky above him.



SCENE III  
GETTING UP

Do not wake sleeping dogs.

It takes him a while to free himself mentally from the situation and his senses begin to perceive the outside world again. He hears the muffled sound of the school bell in the background. As no loud activity can be heard, it must be the second bell, which heralds the start of lessons. He has apparently not noticed the first bell, which announces the end of the break, as he is mentally processing what has happened.

He stands up slowly and brushes the dirt and grass off his trousers and shirt with his hands. Then he picks up his rucksack, which lies half-emptied in the bushes. He carefully begins to pick up everything that has fallen out and pack it neatly back into the rucksack. Once this is done, he slings it over his shoulder and sets off out of the refuge, which had been undisturbed until recently. He takes a deep breath, then breathes it out slowly and heavily before stepping through the bushes and out into the schoolyard. With leaden feet, he makes his way into the school building across the courtyard. What he has just experienced still weighs heavily on him as he makes his way through the entrance hall.

He steps up the stairs with difficulty, his eyes fixed on his feet. The deserted silence around him makes him realize with every step that he is too late. The worry about the reaction of the teacher and his classmates continues to cloud his thoughts. As he takes the last step, however, he unexpectedly lifts his head and his gaze turns across the corridor to the large hallway windows and the sky that he sees through them.

For a fraction of a second, he seems to recognize huge creatures floating along and through the clouds in the white-yellowish billows of cloud wafting loftily on the horizon above the earth.

He stops for a moment, his rucksack firmly in his grasp, and stares intently through the window pane at the sky outside. But no matter how hard he tries, he can no longer make out any flying creatures. His eyes scan the

clouds, searching for the sensory perception or the source behind them, but to no avail.

The foamy, distant clouds of water have a calming effect as they slowly drift by, changing shape as they go. His imagination ponders with newly awakened ambition what the cloud formations could possibly represent. His mind relaxes a little at this thought.

And he meticulously considers what it was that he thought he had seen. It looked like fish or snakes. Or perhaps more like whales or rays? He realizes that he can no longer remember, it happened too quickly. He gazes at the sky for a few more seconds before turning around and making his way down the corridor to his classroom with lighter steps. When he reaches the door, he pauses briefly. He stares at the doorknob for a moment. He breathes in and out again with difficulty. Then he steps inside.

As he opens the door inwards, he can hear the teacher's voice for a split second, which breaks off in mid-sentence. Silence returns. The classmates sitting in their seats turn their eyes away from the teacher, an older man in a light blue shirt and dark gray trousers, at the blackboard or their notebook entries and focus on him. Everyone's eyes are on him, penetrating and scrutinizing.

“I beg your pardon.”

the boy replied to the attention and silence that weighed on him. The words and his gaze were directed at the teacher. As he finishes the sentence, he quickly makes his way to his seat with his head bowed, without waiting for his teacher's reaction.

“You come to me after the lesson”,

he hears behind him as he pulls out his chair and puts his rucksack down next to the table. As he sits down, he hurriedly grabs the right exercise book

and book, as well as his pencil case, and places them on the table. He nimbly pulls out a pen and sets about transferring the previous blackboard inscription into his notebook, while ignoring the stares that are still partly directed at him. With a guilty conscience, he vows to make up for his lateness, at least in part, by following the rest of the lesson all the more attentively.

And so he listens thoughtfully to the teacher's words, who resumes his lesson in a monotone and continues the inscription on the blackboard.

The lessons dragged on until a certain chime announced the end of the school day. Torn away from the static nature of the lesson, the pupils rise from their chairs in different ways but quickly. While the teacher hastily announces the homework to the class, the children pack their school bags and leave the classroom. The boy is in no hurry to get home. With slow movements, he fills his pencil case, closes it and puts it back in his backpack with the rest.

“Why are you late for class?”

asks the teacher, who is suddenly standing next to him.

“I had to go to the toilet, I'm sorry.”

The older man looks at him thoughtfully but motionlessly through his glasses.

“It can't go on like this, boy. It's not the first time you've been late for class.”

The boy's gaze is fixed on the floor, his head bowed. His left hand rests on the table and he holds his rucksack in his right hand.

“I am sorry. It won't happen again.”

“I’ll have to talk to your parents if something like this happens again.”

His grip on the rucksack tightens convulsively, as if it were his only support. The studious older man with thinning gray hair and thin silver glasses looks at him for a moment. Finally, he takes a deep breath and then lets out a worried and annoyed snort.

“Okay, that’s all. You may go.”

The boy then lifts his head, his eyes fixed on the door, and without looking at the teacher, he flees from the classroom at a quick pace. He marches briskly through the almost deserted school building. First through the corridor, then down the double staircase, along the lower corridor and finally out of the entrance area.

SCENE IV  
WAY HOME

To one that will, ways are not missing.



As he steps outside, he can only make out a few students at the end of the schoolyard, who are just disappearing through the gate onto the street. Now the boy slows his steps and trots calmly and without haste across the school grounds. The rays of the summer sun illuminate the square and birds fly quickly overhead through the blue sky with few clouds, chirping happily.

On his way home, the distant hum of traffic can be heard and is only surpassed by the sound of nearby noise. A passing car, a scooter turning the corner, the clacking of traffic lights. The world around him, so full of movement and life, brings a relaxing calm to his agitated mind. With each step over the paving stones of the sidewalks, his breaths become calmer. After a few minutes of walking, his stomach grumbled loudly. 'Oh that's right,' he remembered, he hadn't had a snack today. So he decided to take a short detour to a convenience store.

As a young child, he often went shopping there with his mother. You could get almost anything there, from food, chilled lemonade, juice and coffee drinks to gardening, household and electrical goods. Lost in thought, he strolls through the streets. When he finally turns into the street leading to the store, he is pleased to see that it still looks exactly as he remembers it. The light blue paneling with the owner's name. The red and white striped awning underneath. The large refrigerated drinks machines and a cool box for regular and soft ice cream to the left of the entrance door. And to the right were two tables with a few chairs, surrounded by numerous plant pots and cut flowers, as well as a large magazine rack. Two older gentlemen were drinking coffee at the table to the right of the entrance. As the boy approaches the store, he can see that both gentlemen have a newspaper spread out in front of them, and yet he can hear them happily and animatedly discussing. A small bell rings as he carefully opens the door.

“Good afternoon, my boy!”

the older sales clerk greets him with a smile in his white pharmacist's coat, even though he is in conversation with a young woman.

“How do you do?”,

the boy says back with a friendly face as he heads purposefully through the coolness of the store, which is dark compared to outside, towards the fresh food counter next to the till. He takes a quick look at the selection, then reaches for one of the delicious-looking sandwiches. It consists of two slices of fragrant rye bread with a crispy, thick crust, spread generously with butter and a little salt in between. He picks up the sandwich, half of which is wrapped in food wrapping paper, and digs out the right change from the back pocket of his right trouser. As he places the money on the counter, he looks at the sales clerk, who gives him a friendly nod as he continues his conversation with the lady.

As he steps out, the bell rings again. The boy stops for a moment, then takes a big bite of the bread. Grinning broadly, with flour at the corners of his mouth, he chews his meal with relish. In the background, he hears the old men talking and laughing. He hears the birdsong between the distant sounds of traffic. Right here, in this moment, he is happy again.

And so he sets off on the rest of the way home. The boy has to get his bearings first, because he doesn't really know his way around this neighborhood. Besides, it's been a long time since he was last here.

He sets off happily and two streets further on discovers a small, overgrown alleyway. It looks like an old sneak path that he thinks he knows from the past. To the left and right, the path, which is paved with light-colored cobblestones, is lined with green, densely overgrown bushes and trees. He walks through it, smacking his lips happily. The summer light only partially filters through the canopy of tall trees onto the countless ferns, grasses and flowers that grow wild to the left and right of the path. Bees fly back and

forth between the colorful blossoms, while a few beetles bask on the green leaves. The noise of the road has been silenced here. The song of birds dancing around in the trees and bushes is all the louder and more beautiful.

Astonished by the beauty of the newly discovered secret path, the boy almost forgets to chew. He still has half the bread left as he strolls along the overgrown path with his mouth slightly open. He enthusiastically admires every little detail and soaks up all the impressions like a sponge. Then his gaze suddenly lingers on something in the bushes, but he can't quite put his finger on it. It is brownish, looks like fur, possibly an animal. As he steps closer to take a closer look, he thinks he recognizes the motionless body of a huge cat or a large fox deep in the bushes. He tries to get even closer and carefully push aside the branches of the bushes, when the something suddenly jumps towards him and a dangerous sound cuts through the air.

The boy backs away in a flash and loses his balance. But the dangerous animal doesn't give him a chance to catch his breath. As the boy falls down, it jumps at him from the bushes and tries to grab him, barking. Lying on the ground in panic, he manages to dodge the biting attacks. Everything happens so suddenly. His body, flooded with adrenaline, straightens up with awkward movements and, pumped full of pure fear of survival, he turns around and starts running as fast as he can. The loud, dangerous barking in his neck and the sight of the fierce white teeth of the wild dog in his mind's eye give him unprecedented energy.

The boy bursts from the shortcut, zipping around corners and dashing down streets until he finds his bearings once more. Only when his breath comes in desperate gasps and the sounds of pursuing paws fade into the distance does he muster the courage to glance back. No dog in sight. He halts, knees buckling as he collapses onto the pavement, the thrill of the chase lingering in his veins. His lungs scream for air, his heart thunders like a wild drum, but amid the chaos, laughter spills from his lips, raw and infectious—until a fit of coughing reminds him of his narrow escape.

Gaining his composure, he stretches out on the sidewalk, eyes tracing the expanse of the brilliant blue sky above. What a frightful adventure. His trusty backpack rests beside him, its contents slightly jumbled; he realizes the bread has been sacrificed, yet returning for it is a thought he swiftly dismisses.

With a determined push, he rises, brushing off dust from his pants and shirt, slinging the backpack onto his back. He sets out on the final stretch toward home, a satisfied grin spreading across his face. “Once I’m home, I’ll crash into bed,” he muses, strolling down the pavement, the remnants of excitement still sparkling in his eyes.

SCENE V  
HOME ALONE

Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

As he navigates the final street towards home, his eyes lock onto the familiar shape of his parents' house. It resonates with a sense of belonging yet carries an aura of chill. He strolls past the cream-colored façades of neighboring homes and his own, flanked by lush bushes and the emerald crowns of trees, all basking serenely in the fading glow of summer's embrace. He pushes open the elbow-high garden gate, meandering up the steps to the entrance, where gentle winds coax sweet melodies from the chimes.

With a careful touch, he digs into his right trouser pocket for the keys, selecting the square one that unlocks the front door. A calm flick of the wrist, and he steps into the cool welcome of the entrance.

“Hello! I’m home from school,”

he calls, only to be met by an echoing silence. Assuming solitude reigns, he places his backpack down and settles onto the cloakroom bench. One by one, he frees his shoes, placing them neatly on the waterproof mat, before slipping into the warmth of his slippers and gliding down the eggshell corridor that leads to the shared spaces of living and dining. Peeking into the rooms, he absorbs the light almond hues and modern simplicity of the furnishings, stepping past to find the washroom at the end and his mother’s office just off to the side.

He gently twists the handle, nudging the door open. The dim light from the laptop paints the room in soothing blue, where a stylish arrangement of dark wood shelves houses books and historical treasures. On a black leather couch, draped in the weight of her business attire, his mother sleeps, having surrendered to exhaustion from her demanding career. “She must’ve worked herself to sleep,” he muses, draping a cozy blanket over her before quietly pulling the door shut behind him as he makes his way to the kitchen. With steady hands, he lifts a pan from the cupboard, adding a splash of olive oil before placing it on the stove and turning the heat to medium. He retrieves two eggs, a handful of shiitake mushrooms, and spring onion stems from the

fridge, deftly slicing them on the cutting board. The oil sizzles invitingly as he cracks the eggs into the pan, stirring the ingredients together and stepping aside to admire the rich aromas dance through the air. He plucks vibrant parsley from a pot on the counter, dicing it finely while pondering the moment. Satisfied, he slices two pieces of grain bread, assembling everything on a large plate—the golden scramble spilling over the crusty slices. A final sprinkle of salt, a delicate shower of parsley, and he arms himself with a knife, fork, and a cloth napkin, ready to savor the fruits of his labor.

He carefully opens the door to the office and puts the plate with the appetizingly smelling meal on the coffee table next to his sleeping mother. Before he can leave the room and let her sleep a little longer, however, she seems to move and wake up.

"Oh, no. What time is it?"

she asks hesitantly.

"Hello mom! It's already after 7 p.m. I didn't want to wake you, but I made  
you something to eat..."

"Damn it! Why didn't you wake me up instead of cooking me this unnecessary stuff?"

Visibly tense, she sits up and looks at herself in the mirror while she continues to rant angrily and then disappears into the small bathroom to get ready.

"You should know that I don't eat anything in the evening and now I'm late for the business meeting! What a bummer!"

"I'm sorry. I wanted to do something nice for you. Today was a really bad  
day for me."



"I have absolutely no time right now! Tell your father if it's important to you."

"He's not here."

"Then write to him! I have to go now!"

She calls out to him from the entrance while she puts on her black pumps. Then she frantically grabs her black leather bag and disappears. After the door closes, everything is quiet and empty again. The boy takes the plate with the food and sits down at the kitchen table. He takes his smartphone out of his pocket and calls his father. It rings. The boy waits nervously. After a long ring, a voicemail message comes. "Speak after the beep":

"Hello dad, it's me. I had a bad day today. Can you call me back?"

Disappointed, he hangs up, then looks at the screen of his cell phone for a few moments. He takes a few forks of the omelette and eats a piece of bread. It's probably tasty, but he's neither hungry nor has an appetite right now. He takes the plate to the kitchen, disconsolately drops the leftovers in the trash can and puts the dirty dishes in the dishwasher. He lazily goes upstairs to his room and gets ready for bed. He lays his day clothes neatly on a bench in front of the bed and throws his underwear and socks into the laundry basket. He then takes a fresh shirt and a pair of boxer briefs from one of the lower shelves of his dresser and puts them both on. After changing, he slowly walks into the bathroom, stands in front of the mirror and brushes his teeth. Then he goes back to his room and falls into his bed. He takes his cell phone from the nightstand next to him again and checks it. He is dejected to see that there are no missed calls or messages. He takes a heavy breath in and out, then dials his father's number. When the voicemail rings again after a long time, he ends the call and puts the phone back on the nightstand. He lies there, lost in thought, and starts at the ceiling. Thoughts of everything he has

experienced are buzzing through his head. His feelings fluctuate between anger, fear and sadness. He wishes he was no longer alone.