

Wade in the Light

Isaac sat on the edge of his bed that night, fully clothed, staring at his phone beside him. His leg bounced up and down rapidly. The house was silent. Only moonlight illuminated his room. He kept looking for a reason to make himself go to bed, but there was a ringing in the air that kept him awake.

A few hours ago, he had finished dinner with his parents. At that time, though it was faint, he could have sworn he had heard the voice of Sophia, as if she were outside their dining room windows trying to shout to him. He finished cleaning up after eating, accepting his parents' jokes about the fly incident with forced laughter.

“You alright hon?” His mother had asked.

“Yep,” He replied curtly while spraying the last bits of food off the dishes, “Just in a hurry to get back to my room.”

“Your dad and I were just joking with you. I hope it didn't bother you too much,” She put a hand on his shoulder.

“I'm fine mom, thank you,” It had occurred to him that crazy talk, such as the subject of talking lights, could probably land him on the couch of a shrink rather than be understood, “I just want to talk to Sophia.”

“Wow, the two of you are real peas in a pod, huh? You spend a lot of time with her. Will we be meeting her soon?”

Isaac smiled, “I hope so,” He had said as he shot Sophia a text.

Hey, weird question, but are you ok?

Now he was here. Weighing what a reasonable, respectful amount of time was before reacting. Expecting to hear something. Hoping to hear anything. But she never responded. His leg had been moving almost continuously since he sat down.

Another moment passed. That was when he heard a screech outside his window, and ran quickly over to visualize the source. His eyes scanned the dark horizon until they made out a vague rippling in the air above the trees of Spike Woods.

Deciding he had seen enough, Isaac ran out of his room, down the stairs, and out to the garage through the door in the kitchen. His bike was leaning against the wall inside. Both of his parents would probably hear the garage door open, but it did not matter at this point. He opened the door and took off down the street, pedaling as fast as he could. There was an eerie silence all around, as if the whole neighborhood had been suddenly abandoned. Not even sleep was so quiet.

As he approached the end of the road, he noticed that he had arrived much faster than usual. His breathing was also unexpectedly even. This is when he claims to have first truly understood how much that light had affected him. The vigor that he now felt coursing through his body had given him improved athleticism. It would have allowed him to sprint through the woods at full speed without taking a break, had he not froze in his tracks.

Mentally, he had charged forward, but his body was behind him. There was a sense of betrayal. This body, no matter how strong it had become, was suddenly rejecting him.

“Why?” He shook, tightly clenching his fist, “Something is wrong. I’m right here. I rode all this way. Something is wrong. Something is wrong.”

“You’re afraid,” Said another voice. A voice just like his, with a somewhat spiteful tone, “You know what you are,” Its face smiled from the darkness all around him. A broad, toothy grin.

Tendrils of shadow began to reach out, ready to drown him in hopelessness, when a second voice reached out. A warm, familiar voice, “Isaac, why do you stand there?”

“I’m afraid,” he said shakily.

“Do not be afraid, Isaac. I am with you,” The voice was understanding, yet firm.

However, there was a nagging in the back of Isaac’s mind. The shadows were quiet. They had laid a seed of doubt, “*I don’t know who you are,*” He thought, “*Why should I listen to you? Have I gone insane?*”

Suddenly a burst of light shined before him, and the voice grew too loud for his own thoughts to outpeak, “You know me Isaac. I am the light that rejuvenated your body, and opened your mind. I am the voice that revealed secrets of this world to you. And I am the one who chases away the darkness in your heart, yet you still heed the darkness enough to question who I am. Let your heart be released!” After these words, the light faded.

Isaac could feel a tension release from his shoulders that he had not previously noticed. Freed from his chains of fear, he charged forward. The woods appeared to open up in front of him. In the darkness, the path was clear. It led him directly to the wall. He sensed the barrier with his sense of touch before seeing it with his eyes. Similar to feeling static. It was barely visible.

For Isaac, walking through the illusion had no effect on him as he crossed over to the field on the other side. Sunlight shined down on the grassy field. The change in time mattered little to him however. His only concern at that moment was the creature flying quickly toward him.

He could feel that it possessed intelligence and power. It spoke to him without its voice, “One after another you come crawling like ants to our ship. I am tired of your kind, and tired of this place,” It landed gracefully in front of him, “I don’t know how any of you found this place or how you were able to enter. It must be a blessing from the Dissonant, but why?”

Isaac was taken aback by the appearance and communication skill of the creature in front of him. Its massive dark eyes made it appear as though it could see everything at once and even though it was not imposing, its spindly body created the feeling of seeing a spider crawl out in your room, “What is the Dissonant?” Isaac thought innocently.

The creature’s head perked up in shock, “The Dissonant? That was not meant for you to hear. How could you have possibly heard my inner thoughts?” And then more quietly, “The prisoners in the ship must be moved,”

“What prisoners? What are you? Where is Sophia?” Isaac’s confusion began to turn to impatience and anger.

“One of the female humans, you are the third to come seeking her. Do you not know of the Zath, of whom I am Malsifus? Two of my men have had their frames destroyed. I must leave this place. I hate that I cannot hide anything from you,” With that, the creature turned around and began to fly away as fast as it had arrived.

Isaac followed after him, keeping pace with relative ease. He could see their destination, a shining silver tower.

“Get back human!” Malsifus shouted, and opened a palm toward Isaac, who was shoved harshly into the ground.

He stood back up and continued after Malsifus, “Stop!” He shouted. A wave of energy pulsed through the air and nearly knocked Malsifus out of flight

Malsifus approached the cylindrical silver tower and waved his hand. A large portal opened on its side. Multiple crescent shaped panels rotated in sync as they spread apart from the center. He flew in head first, and Isaac jumped in just behind him before he could close the door again. Darkness shrouded him.

“You’re in my world now, human,” Four thin fingers gripped tightly around the top of his head.

Then, there was a burst of light. The hand and its arm grew stiff. Malsifus was floating in front of Isaac, holding the top of his head as they both stood in the middle of a large, open space. The ground of this space was black, and jagged. The sunlight was dim and rust colored. Magma sloshed up all around them.

Isaac looked on in astonishment, “What is this place? It feels-”

“My home planet. How are you doing this?” Interrupted Malsifus.

Isaac could not comprehend how he would be able to create this image, “This is you, isn’t it?” He asked.

Malsifus’ mind scrambled to interpret the strange question.

Isaac continued, “What are you?” The image around them began to quake, “This place, it’s like my inner garden, but it’s horrible. Is this where you intend to take my friends?” The image scattered into the darkness, and he swung his fist. It made contact with a thin, boney chin.

Malsifus’ hand slipped from Isaac’s head, and there was a thump as his body fell to the floor. Isaac reached out to feel the space around him. The first touch of a wall indicated to him that there were no sharp corners. They bowed out and were cold to the touch. He ran his hand along one as he proceeded forward through the winding corridor. Soon, he saw a dim light ahead of him. Ripples of white light refracted against the silvery inner walls of the tower.

Isaac came around a bend to see Sophia, Margot, Duke, and Misty all floating in tubes filled with blue liquid. All of them were unconscious.

“Sophia!” He shouted, and searched frantically for some type of switch or button to open the tubes and set them free, but there was nothing.

Smoothness surrounded him. The familiar feeling of fear began to creep up on him again. Its wicked hand grabbing him on the shoulder and squeezing until he snapped. He slammed his fist against the glass. Then again, and again. But it was when he stepped back and shouted again that another pulse of energy released from his chest, cracking Sophie’s tube.

He stared for a moment and then shouted again, but without result. He reflected on the feeling. The energy leaving his core. He stressed to repeat it, and when he did, there was a beat. A note of music that pulsed. Not in his mind and not in his chest, but from his very soul.

Another wave, more directed, burst forward and shattered the shell that imprisoned Sophia. She collapsed to the floor, still unconscious. Isaac scooped her up, wiping away locks of wet brown hair from her face, “Sophia, Sophia, talk to me!”

A voice chimed from all around, “Launch sequence initiated,” And the entire space was illuminated with a red light.

Then, a strong force slung Isaac from the floor where he held Sophia, smashing him against the tubes. Malsifus stood at the room’s entrance. A horrible croak came from his mouth. Words fumbled out in strange, jagged fluctuations, “I will crush you!”