

# The Dream-Giver

Clouds hung peacefully in the clear, starry sky over the small town. Birds chirped quietly in the dawn – the mysterious part of the morning that is neither night nor day. Washing hung from the line as if in anticipation of the next day's adventure. What would it be?

Without warning, a flash rushed past, roaring like a lorry on a highway, but its vibrant light didn't disturb the children asleep in their dormitory. Long, boney fingers pushed the shutters to slowly open the window. The scrawny, goggled creature, like a man crossed with a daddy longlegs, peered carefully into the room. His wings fluttered in the cool night breeze. The sleeping children did not know he was the Dream-Giver. He checked his notebook and looked at the address outside – 2655 Kensington Ave. "Yes, this is the right place!" he whispered, relieved.

He picked up his stick and glowing bag (as if full of fire) and floated down to the nearest bed. Cautiously lifting the bag from the end of the stick, he placed it onto the girl's duvet, making sure not to wake her. Glowing, golden eggs tumbled over the bedcovers. The Dream-Giver skillfully cracked an egg over the girl's ballet shoes and a tiny, beautiful ballerina emerged, twisting and turning, dancing into the girl's dreams. Next: a book on space. Murmuring a magic spell under his breath, the delighted Dream-Giver broke an egg onto an astronaut who immediately shot up to the ceiling returning to produce satisfying dreams for the overjoyed book owner. The Dream-Giver continued to conjure up enchanting dreams for each child, each tailor made to reveal their heart's desire: space adventures; baseball matches; jazz concerts and more. The Dream-Giver was pleased with his work.

Unexpectedly, an egg toppled off the edge of the bed. Almost in slow motion, it plunged and smashed onto a book, "Chantico (The Shadow Serpent)". A tornado of light exploded from the page; it swirled around the room sucking everything into its vortex. In a flash, the boy-astronaut was transported back hundreds of years to a tranquil, enchanted forest.

I awoke with start, transfixed by butterflies as they fluttered around. Instantly, the peace was interrupted by a fierce roar and I realised I was surrounded by curious, staring, stone faces. Skeletons of ancient warriors lay against the trees as if asleep. I knocked an ancient statue, unaware that a creature was waking within. Terrified, I began to run through the forest, gripped by fear. I reached a cliff edge, came to a sudden stop and screamed in panic.

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A shadow overwhelmed me as I turned to face a huge, menacing jaw roaring ravenously in my face. I precariously teetered on the edge of the cliff. The deafening roar stopped as the monster was distracted by drops of golden rain falling around him; a glowing egg came hurtling towards him and smashed onto the ground. A seedling appeared and started to grow. And grow. The branches grew rapidly as they twisted and twined like a snake trapping the monster who howled in fury. He writhed and was beaten. Immediately, a huge oak tree grew over his defeated body and peace returned.

At that moment, with his heart racing, the boy woke. Sleepily reaching for the book on his bed, he studied the pictures curiously. How could they be so similar to his dream? His questions remained unanswered as, out of the corner of his eye, a boney shadow darted towards the window and escaped. It left no trail but a puzzling breeze gently shaking the shutters at the window.