\* = \*come back to change word\*

ACT I - Prelude

Was it a dream? John doesn't know anymore, when you have insomnia its difficult to tell the difference between reality and the surreal. For as long as John can remember the nights have been sleepless, never ending, dreary, painful with no escape from this suffering. As he sits at the desk of his mundane job he tries to conjure some kind of plan, some way to make his miserable existence better, but the truth is there is no way out. It's a mind numbing day to day routine of having to clean up his bosses mess, the moronic ass who pissed all over Johns future, taking the promotion that was rightfully his all because the CEO couldn't keep her legs together. As John stares at the paperwork growing on the edge of his desk in his mind there has to be some way out, some way he can sleep and break the seemingly endless cycle. He's tried everything from herbal remedies, those cheap relaxation tapes where whale and bird calls are mashed together that you can buy from late night teleshopping, even running until his legs give way from physical exhaustion. His last salvation and only hope would lies with sleeping pills, and to get advice regarding these drugs John decides to visit his local doctor.

Later that day John visited his local GP to get advice on his sleeping disorder, the doctor immediately tells him there is a way out and hands John a prescription for a 3 months supply of pills to help him sleep but gives very clear instructions, "Only take 1 per night, no more no less. If the pills no longer feel as if they are taking effect come back and see me." John walks away with new found hope and happiness that finally things may be looking up, even if it was something as simple as being able to sleep at night. As he walks back to his apartment join feels as if a huge weight has been lifted, life can only get better, right? As the thought runs through his mind suddenly everything goes black, there is no light coming in from the window where the sun had been previously shining, even the lights in the narrow corridor between rooms had gone black. The sound of children crying, cars driving past, birds chirping and even the wind ceased to make noise or even exist. The air around him was still and icy as he felt a chill travel down his spine. At first John thought he had gone blind, deaf, maybe even dead. He retraced the last few moments in his mind, and nothing he could think of could've caused this.

John braces himself against the nearest wall he could find in the pitch black, waving his arms manically. He stills himself for a moment, closes his eyes and tells himself "it's not real, it's not real". Suddenly from the darkness come a bellow of cries that echo through the halls, John stares in the direction the cries are coming from but he can't see, it's still pitch black. The cries draw closer, slowly getting louder as it approaches John. His mind tell him to run, but how can he, he can't see his hand directly in front of his face, it's as if someone stole all the light in the world and left it cold, dark and desolate. Whatever is making the noise is close now, John can hear footsteps, smell an awful stench and he knows he must run, but he's completely paralyzed from the waste down, unable to move from petrifaction of this unknown entity. It's now stood directly in front of John, he can feel the air from this person/creatures lungs on his face, the crying stops and from nowhere the lights in the hall come back on. Stood in front of him is a grey skinned creature, at first he mistakes it for a girl as he is looking at the ground and the wails sounded human , but what girl has a head littered with hundreds of eyes as black as death, talons like giant razors and a mouth where their stomach should be filled with nail like teeth.

John doesn't move, he is completely frozen. The creature begins to let out an almighty screech which forces John to his knees, the pain is horrific as if thousands of nails were being hammered into his head at once, as he looks up the creatures mouth widens preparing for the meal to come.

John closes his eyes and shouts "LEAVE ME ALONE!" He feels a hand reach out and grasp his shoulder, this is accompanied by a familiar voice, "are you okay?" John shoots his eyes forward, darting his head in every direction, looking for the creature. He then looks to the direction where the voice came from, nothing, no-one is around and everything is exactly the same as before the event occurred. John rushes back to his apartment and slams the door behind him. "What the hell was that!?" he thinks to himself, "did all of that really just happen? No. It couldn't have, there is no such thing... There is nothing on Earth that could possibly look like that, and that cry was other worldly." He tries to erase the memory of the event and relax, but finds himself playing what he saw over and over, trying to think of some logical explanation to what it could be, what exactly happened with the lights and sunlight fading into complete darkness. "So the lights could've just gone out because of a shortage in the fuse circuit, the sun went out due to a solar eclipse and..." He ponders what the creature could've been, why the cry was so deafening and where the hell it went. "I can't deal with this right now." So he decides to take a pill and go to sleep, tomorrow is a new day and maybe things will be clear when he awakes.

Act II MOFO! - The Dream Begins

After John takes his medication it only takes a matter of minutes before he starts to feel drowsy and light headed, for the first time in almost 2 years he's feeling as if he can get to sleep, but every time he closes his eyes all he can see if the beast that stood before him in the corridor. He feels the chill down his spine, the stench from the rotting corpse like \*thing\* still fresh in his nostrils, the cries alone are enough to make him feel uneasy and thus he cannot sleep. "Why is this happening to me!" he screams, "I just want to forget!" he curls into a ball on the sofa and begins to cry. Through his sobbing he knows the events of the day will haunt him through out the night, he won't be able to sleep for weeks even with taking 1 pill a night but it is something he so desperately craves. He picks up the bottle of pills, checks the label to see if there is any warning anywhere, "huh, nothing..." mulling over the idea of taking more than 1 he decides to make some food and think it through before he does go through with it.

John makes himself Steak and Chips, simple yet satisfying. Sitting down and turning the TV on he decides he'll watch something peaceful, and as an avid lover of learning he puts on a documentary about mountains, volcanoes, rainforests and other giant natural landmarks scattered across the globe. When he changes the channel the presenter is talking about animals that spend most of their time living in the tree tops of the rainforests, when they come across a sloth, hanging from a tree branch high in the canopies sleeping. The presenter starts by saying "these wonderful and gentle creatures spend most of their life sleeping, the very little they do move is spent looking for food." This gets John thinking about the pills again, only 3 bites into his steak he can't take his eyes off the bottle, then the memories flood in and before he can get himself worked up about what happened he necks the bottle. After doing so he decides to watch the rest of his documentary and eat the food knowing that sooner or later that many drugs in his system will surely knock him out, giving him the long deserved rest he needed.

As he gets down to the last bite of his dinner, John starts to feel light headed, sick and his vision is going blurry. As he sits there trying to overcome the severe cramping pains in his stomach he begins to panic. "Why did I take so many!?" he asks himself, he then remembers the doctors orders, "Only take 1 per night", making him realise that what he had done was a huge mistake. The images on the television begin to warp and the sound eminating around the round is muffled as if it were under water, taking one last glance at the bottle as his body slams to the floor he tries to call for help, but nothing comes out of his mouth.

Act III - An unexpected chain of events

John awakes, but something is wrong. As he lays on his back he can hear the sound of birds chriping, trees as high as the clouds themselves. He shoots up and to his suprise he see's tall green grass, lavish brushes as far as the eye can see, as he rubs his eyes to make sure this is all real, not just a trick of the mind one thought runs through his head, "Where the hell am I!?". He sits there for a minute, trying to remember if anything happened after he took the pills, but all John can remember was watching his show on TV and eating the steak he had prepared. Standing up he says "well sitting here isn't going to get me anywhere!" and begins to walk forward, in a general down hill direction. Taking in his surroundings he can see no end to what appears to be a vast and lush forest, but as he ponders he starts feels eyes piercing through him, as if every step he takes is being watched. Stopping to look around he notices he can't hear the birds anymore, in fact there is no sound at all, not even from the rustling of trees blowing in the wind.

His muscles start to tense, and a chill travels up his spine. He sees nothing to his right or his left and as he turns he feels the presence getting closer. He shoots around to face behind him and all around the lush forest is starting to decay, everything is turning black, the smell of rotting fills the air all around. He then spots something glistening in the distance straight ahead, and it is getting closer. Footsteps start to echo all around him, he shoots his head in every direction, but he cannot see. All the light and life that was once around John has now faded into darkness, all that is left are the glistening objects approaching John, which are now just meters away. He turns and begins to run, running as fast as his legs will carry him when he hears a deep bellow ahead. He stops for a moment and sees the same glistening objects he saw before, this time they are closer, he changes direction and keeps running, panting heavily. He can hear the footsteps getting faster, closer and heavier. Whatever is around is getting closer, and John isn't about to stay and find out what that is. Loud screeches fill the air around him as the pace of the approaching creatures footsteps hasten, he can feel it directly behind him slowly clawing away back his lead. Through his panic he decides to glance behind him, finding out exactly how close the creature is, when he suddenly trips on a loose tree root which had been uprooted. As he tumbles to the ground all he can do is brace himself for the approaching terror and demise he faced.

Writhing on the floor in agony and knowing impending doom is approaching he closes his eyes, praying the pain will be short. The footsteps are upon him now, one last breath is taken as John prepares for the beast, when he feels a hand grab his arm. Shooting his head up to face this person/thing he can see nothing but a cloak as the darkness conceals their face, as the figure shouts "WE NEED TO MOVE, NOW!", but John just stares into the dark hole under the cloak.

Again the voice shouts "WE NEED TO MOVE..." but this time it is followed by "OR WE'RE BOTH GOING TO DIE!"

Shooting to his in feet in amazement John forgets about the pain and immediately falls back to the ground, this time with the sharp pain piercing through every inch of his body, he lets out a cry of agony. "My leg... It's broken!" he replies.

The figure looks behind John, and immediately drags him to his feet. "Grit your teeth. You see that building?", John nods as he can make out a feint outline. "We have to take shelter in there before The Darkened gets us."

Without further direction he begins to run, one leap at a time, running as fast as he can. The figure is carrying him under his shoulder and behind them there is a deafening chorus of roaring from the darkness, heavy steps racing, the sound of trees being snapped and collapsing to the greenery below.

John is just about to give in as the pain is too much to bare, when the strange cloaked figure screams "OPEN THE DAMN GATES! THE DARKENED ARE UPON US!" He looks up and see the building just ahead, but he can now see it is no ordinary building but a large Keep. Ahead light penetrates the darkness, enormous stone doors open as they inch closer. Ahead lays a bridge, but John thinks nothing of it, all that is on his mind is not passing out from the pain of getting this far, the will to fight and escape the terror behind him keeps him going. Behind a bellow of daemonic screams let loose, all over the forest all that can be heard is the creatures that persue.

As they approach the gate he stops, turning and hoping to see the creature so he can face the it, but as he does there is a vast flash of light which ripples through the dark. Over and over light brightens the darkness with wails of pain roaring from the forest but John cannot see the creature. "What are you doing!?" snaps the cloaked figure, as John feels a sharp tug, which triggers the pain to flow through his body again. They both run to the keep and once inside he passes out from the pain finally.