

Will's Inferno Preview

He floated, weightless in space, feeling a newfound peace of the soul. Was this death? He supposed it wasn't that bad, to float in a sea of eternity, neither awake nor asleep. To drift forever somewhere between consciousnesses. That was when something hit him. Hard. Will's eyes burst open, seeing the ground rapidly getting smaller. Something, or someone had grabbed him by the scruff of his shirt, pulling him up and up. What was going on? Will wiggled, trying to get a better view of what was propelling him upwards.

"Quit squirming down there!" a sharp New York accent called down to him, "I'm already behind schedule and trying to find you again if I drop you will put me back another hour."

"What's going on? Where am I?" Will shouted, terrified from the rapidly increasing height.

"Look kid, I already told you, I'm behind schedule, so there's no time for the in-flight briefing," the voice replied.

Will was about to shout that this wasn't a plane when they took a sharp turn toward a cloud, whipping Will's weightless body like a ragdoll. Will didn't realize he was screaming until they burst through the cloud at a speed Will was sure should have turned them both into pancakes. They whipped here and there, seemingly at random through the cloud. At one point, Will was sure they almost got struck by a bolt of lightning, only avoiding it by dodging to the left at the last moment possible.

Just when Will felt like he'd be stuck in this cloud forever, doing stunts that would give a fighter-pilot an adrenaline rush. They burst out of the cloud into the top of a brightly lit cavern, somehow very much solid despite the cloudy texture.

"Ok, pal, this landing might be a bit rougher than usual," the voice said.

Instead of slowing down, they went into a sharp dive, hurtling face-first towards a floor that seemed much more solid than the roof they had come in through. Will knew this was it, if he wasn't dead already he was going to be. He thought of his cat, Spot, and his friends back home, and how he never got to say goodbye. He wondered how they would separate his red splat from that of the voice's, he certainly didn't feel like sharing a casket with whoever his "pilot" was. He closed his eyes, knowing

contact would come in a matter of moments. And then, it didn't. All laws of physics told Will that even if the voice pulled up, he would be torn apart from the inertia. But he wasn't. Will's eyes fluttered open, terrified of what he would see, yet he remained whole, floating just a couple inches above the floor.

"Sorry about that," the voice said in front of him, "misjudged the distance."

The voice came from an old man with a long white beard and unkempt hair. He wore a flowing toga and had two large, feathered wings poking out from behind him.

"Y-You're an angel," Will stuttered.

"Angel, daemon, poorly paid taxi service, same difference," the voice replied, "Anyways, like I was saying, I am running WAY behind schedule, so I gotta get going."

"Wait, won't you tell me what's going on?" Will protested, though he felt like he already knew the answer.

"You're dead of course, kaput, pushin' daisies, no longer among the living, you know..." and he made a gesture of cutting his throat, complete with the noise.

"But this must be some kind of mistake, I can't be dead?" Will protested.

"Hey, that's not my problem, if you got an issue you can take it up with customer service, I'm just a messenger, or delivery driver I guess. Speaking of messages, I gotta get going", he said, looking down at his wrist, "Just go talk to one of the clerks," and he pointed to something behind Will.

It was then Will realized that they weren't alone, all around them were hundreds of people, all waiting in long lines separated by thick red cords. Curiously, Will's queue was completely empty, and led to one of the many booths that each line queued in front of.

Will turned around, ready demand the angel bring him back or at least do something, but he was gone. Left with no other choice, Will made his way to the booth.