Dream Portals: Sacore's Struggle

By: Riley McShane



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Prologue

Recon, are deadly creatures, perhaps the most dangerous monsters known to man. They are nearly impossible to kill. With claylike flexible skin, their strange play-dough-like bodies can morph into any shape, although they prefer the slither form - an enormous, eyeless serpent with a deadly, poison tipped tail, and if you're lucky, you'll never run into one of those.

Sacore was not lucky.

Gasping, Sacore leapt out of the woods, his slashed, bloodied armor in a jumble. He only just managed to gather his broken sword and battered shield and dive behind a boulder before the Recon appeared. Roaring thunderously, the beast slashed hungrily at the boulder, its razor claws slicing like a hot knife through butter. The boulder fell, nothing now but huge slabs of useless rock, and Sacore crouched unprotected for a moment before leaping up. But it was too late. The creature was bubbling, dissolving into a puddle of gooey liquid. But it only lasted a second, because the next instant, the Slither began to form.

Long and slender and absolutely enormous, the Slither gave a deafening hiss. Sacore stumbled backward, and then the Slither struck.

Its razor-sharp teeth glistening with poison, the Slither wound itself around and around Sacore's body. Crying out, he slashed at the beast's head, decapitating the Slither. But its head just hung in midair before its clay textured body reformed the gap. It was like cutting through water; absolutely pointless. In that instant, Sacore knew resistance wasn't an option, and he let his body go limp.

Unfortunately that gave the Slither the edge it needed to wind itself even tighter around Sacore's chest. Sacore gasped, as he already struggling for breath. He could feel the Slither tightening, and he heard his own ribs crack under the pressure. His life flashed before his eyes, and he knew deep down that he was, one way or another, about to die. That was when the Slither gave the killing blow: it plunged its needle-sharp, fatally poisonous tail right into Sacore's heart.

The Slither is a strange creature, because, although its tail is said to be more poisonous than anything on earth, and it is said that death comes almost instantly, right after an instant of excruciating pain -- the reality is far, far more horrific. Getting pierced by a Slither's tail will bestow upon you a fate much worse than death. This is what Sacore realized as the poison slowly leaked through his veins, causing a burning pain. The cruel realization suddenly hit... the poison wasn't hurting his body, instead, it was destroying his *mind*. He could feel himself growing dark, and twisted. His last thought was, "I could've done more..." Then seventeen year old Sacore closed his eyes for the last time.

Chapter 1

Kalie sped down the road. If she didn't get to school on time, Mrs. Cofflin would give her "the talk." Not to mention, Sara would have her hide. Sara was funny... most days, but she could easily become angered. Kalie had been friends with Sara ever since she had moved, which had been five years ago. Kalie had been quiet back then, but now she was a big ball of energy. Kalie usually had brown hair and blue eyes, but in the sun her hair turned lighter. Her eyes changed with her mood, although most of the time they were green. Sara had red, short hair and dark brown eyes and she was shorter than Kalie. But Sara didn't mind. As Kalie rounded the corner into the school-yard, she was so lost in thought that she ran into a kid on a bike.

"Watch out!," he yelled as he swerved away.

"Sorry!," Kalie yelled back as she passed. "I should start thinking about what's going on around me," Kalie thought as she arrived just in time for school.

"What took you so long?!," Sara yelled.

"Sorry, I guess I really have no reason," Kalie replied.

"Well," Sara said, "there has to be some explanation!"

"All right! I was drawing again! You happy?"

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Sara whacked Kalie with her frog lunch bag. "I love your art Kalie, but you can't be late!," Sara hissed. Kalie smiled, and walked inside. Kalie rushed into Mrs. Cofflin's class. "Kalie!," Mrs. Cofflin said, "Two seconds more and you would have been tardy!"

"Yes ma'am."

"Now class, " Mrs. Cofflin sighed, "We have a new student. Her name is Rowan. I'll expect that you give her some help around school."

"I can find my way around, myself," Rowan spat.

"Well, I know you're new, so I'll just leave you be for now. But, you will never use that tone with me again!" Rowan just sat in a seat. Kalie had never seen anyone act so rude to a teacher. After some thought, Kalie decided that Rowan just needed a friend. During lunch Kalie walked over to Rowan. "Hi." Rowan just stared off into space.

Without a pause, Kalie sat down next to her. "So how has your day been?," Kalie asked.

Rowan looked at her, and glared. "Absolutely, horrible!," Rowan hissed. *Okay...*.Kalie thought. So they just sat there in silence. "Out of all the stupid things, my first day at school had to be the worst ever!," Rowan yelled.

"It's all right," Kalie replied, and reached out her hand. "Hi. My name is Kalie."

Rowan stared at it for a little while, then shook her hand. "I'm Rowan."

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Chapter 2

Rain pounded down on Kalie's head causing her head to throb and ache. "Out of all the stupid days for it to rain!," Kalie grumbled. As if answering back, the rain poured even harder. "Aaarrrgggghhhh!," Kalie screamed. Lightning flashed. Kalie pulled off her oversized hood, which wasn't providing much protection from the elements. She looked around, with a much better view of her surroundings. Everything was dark, but something was different.

Kalie couldn't quite tell what it was until she glanced down into the gutter. There was something deep blue, and it was bubbling. Kalie squinted. She gasped, as she watched the liquid grow larger. The blue ooze began to form into a giant creature with a tail ending in a deadly sharp point. Kalie ran! The creature flung it's head around to see who or what was

there. Kalie began to scream, but her voice was cut short. Without any warning, this blue-ooze-monster lashed out its tail wrapping it tightly around her. Kalie's throat was caught as she squirmed as she struggled to get free. But it was no use. The monster bellowed as the thunder clapped loudly.

"Kalie!," someone screamed. Kalie attempted to turn towards this new voice, but all she could see was a shadowy figure. The monster's deafening roar increased. Kalie used this distraction to try to loosen the creature's grip, but immediately stopped when she saw the poison tip of the monster's tail. Suddenly, something came flying through the air piercing the poisonous tail forcing the creature to drop Kalie. She immediately fell onto the cement. Pain pulsed through her as Kalie looked up to see the creature's tail reforming. Suddenly, the creature turned and ran towards the dark shadow. Kalie began to lift herself up but her ankle gave in. "Help!," she screamed. The shadow figure ran towards her but was cut off by the monster.

"Go! Run!," yelled the person.

"I can't," Kalie cried. But the figure didn't answer.

Kalie woke up in a cold sweat. The dream had seemed so real. Kalie felt her ankle, but it was all right. The rain had been so real, too, yet she was bone-dry. Kalie sat in her bed for a minute trying to calm herself into reality. Finally, she went back to bed, hoping she wouldn't have that dream again.

Chapter 3

Kalie carried Marie into the house and dumped the kitten onto her bed. Kalie sat down with her cat. Marie purred and waltzed up to Kalie. Kalie let Marie climb into her lap and proceeded to scratch her ears. Kalie began to revisit the dream she had last night. It sent chills up her spine. The creature was blood-chilling, with its large fangs and muscular body tense and ready to crush her at any second. But who was the shadow figure? Who was this mysterious hero? Kalie heard a slight knocking sound on her door. "Come in." The door slowly opened and in stepped her mom. "Good morning." Kalie smiled.

"You know you're late for school," her mom said. Kalie shot up off her bed. "I totally forgot! I thought it was Saturday!" Kalie exclaimed. Her mom just laughed hard at having fooled her daughter. "Mo-o-o-o-m!," Kalie whined as she sat back on her bed.

"Breakfast will be ready in a ten minutes," her mom replied and shut the door behind her. Kalie wondered if she should tell her mom about her dream. But the idea fluttered and disappeared. Kalie scooped up Marie. She looked out her window to see the road. A few cars

were parked along the street...but not her dad's. He must have gone somewhere. Kalie got up and ran down stairs as Marie followed her. "Mom?" Kalie yelled. "Where's Dad?"

"He went to the store."

Kalie walked back up the stairs and went into her room. Thrilled that it was actually Saturday, she pulled out her sketch book. She zipped through her collection of art. She was searching. Having drawn most of her pictures about her dreams, there were several pictures that looked as if they came from another world. Shivers shot up her spine! In the midst of all her drawings, she spotted the monster... the very creature from last night's dream!!! It appeared to be leaping right off the page into her room! Kalie immediately slammed the book. But the creature's face still swam in her mind. Kalie dared not close her eyes. Turning to her trusted friend Kalie whispered, "Marie? What am I to do?" Marie just purred and begged to be petted. Kalie smiled.

Mom called for Kalie's assistance with breakfast. "Coming!" Kalie yelled back, and with that she sped down the stairs.

Chapter 4

Over the next week, the terrifying dreams got even worse. They began to repeat, all turning and twisting in different ways, while still having the same plot. "Do I need to see a doctor?" she thought repeatedly, but she purposely shoved that idea to the side. She decided, instead, to try and forget the dreams and go on with life as usual. Back at school, Sara seemed to be eyeing Kalie more and more every day. "Are you okay?," she would ask every morning.

"I'm great!," Kalie would lie. Her grades began to suffer until finally, her grades didn't reflect any of her intelligence. Kalie decided to try going to after school study hall, but she couldn't focus there either. Because of her dreams, this lack of sleep had left her drained of energy. Her parents told her, "If you don't keep up in school, we will have to make drastic changes!" But Kalie didn't listen. She quit listening to everyone ever since the beginning of the dreams.

Kalie had just came out of Study Hall and realized she would have to walk home. Rain kept coming in a blinding downpour. Kalie bit her lip hard as she tried to keep herself calm. "Aaarrrggghhh!," she screamed, "Today couldn't get any worse!" Then suddenly the rain became even harder. Kalie grumbled, "Why me?!" Kalie slowly pulled off her hood, and let it flop on her back. Slowly, but silently she looked around, fearful of attracting attention of people walking by. But the streets were empty. She tried to shake off the unsettling feeling of being alone, but knowing she wasn't. Everything was dark, except for the occasional lightning strike. Kalie stared at some dark blue goo near the gutter. Kalie squinted, trying to see better. But the view didn't change. "Oh no," Kalie thought as she cautiously stepped toward the gelatinous mass, but jumped back when it began to enlarge. Shocked, Kalie could only gawk at the ghastly sight. A head began to emerge from the ground, then a body.

A tail sprung up with a sharp needle like knife. Kalie wanted to walk away and convince her mind she didn't see anything at all. Impossible. But it seemed as if the moment she breathed it knew she was there. Kalie was about to scream but her lungs were squeezed by the monster's gigantic fists. Kalie's breath came in small, short gasps, as she felt the monster's claws sinking into her side. Kalie struggled under the pressure. A flash in the sky lit up the creature's face. "Stop!" yelled a shadowy figure. The beast turned its head toward the figure. The creature tensed as it strained to hear the next command.

"Hylesic!" the figure hissed. The monster bellowed deeply at a crack of thunder.

Kalie clasped her hands over her ears, "No!" And with those words the monster dropped Kalie. She slammed hard on the ground, spraining her ankle.

"Kalie!" came a voice from the mysterious figure. Wincing in pain, she looked up through the haze of the rain. The shadowy figure was by her side in an instant. He was tall and somewhat thin, his eyes were the only part of his face that could be seen. They burned like an icy blue fire. "Wh-who?" Kalie stuttered in shock. The hooded man knelt down toward her. "My name isn't to be known yet," he replied. "We have to get out of here!"

The figure grabbed her hand and helped he stand up. "Run!" The man said. "You have to get out of here!" Kalie forgot the pain shooting through her and began to run for all she had. The monster charged in her direction. Kalie evaded the monsters grasp, as it swiped the air beside her. The man pulled out a dagger and with extreme speed began slashing at the beast. The monster screamed in pain as small gashes were torn through its side. It began to slow. Kalie and the man ran as long as they could so they could get as far away from the creature.

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[&]quot;What was that all about?!" Kalie huffed trying to catch her breath.

[&]quot; You're a dream portal," replied the man.

"A what?!" Kalie yelled.

"A portal between the dream world and real world."

"And exactly how would that connect to the monster?"

"It works for a man who wants to use you to get between the worlds."

"Why?!"Kalie puffed.

"I don't know..."

Kalie sat down and took a huge breath. "Thank you," she slurred, "So how did you... well, I mean..." The man slowly stood up, "I know someone who's just like you... well it's complicated." The man took a deep breath before continuing, "I'm afraid this is only the beginning..."

To Be Continued....