

# The Rainbow Hallucination

## Chapter 1

In the dream, I will float  
Kick the troll, romp of lore  
Bring me flowers; gifts  
Turning bright blue, falling down  
Colorful sky, please let me glee  
be in glee. forever  
Hey, picture us - we are free  
White clouds bringing forth peace

- to Erik Satie's Gnossienne No. 6

I went to the forest with my adorable dog, Zippy. It's March. Spring time. We walk for three hours. He sniffs lowly among the soil. His fur gathers a couple ticks. I remove them. He has his tongue out, he is thirsty. I set down his bowl and pour water into it. He drinks. Zippy is a young beagle. White fur with brown spots. He's two and a half years old. I let him sniff and dig. He makes little holes in the dirt.

Golden sunlight is filtered by the standing trees, the foliage, hitting the ground and lighting my stony path. Foliage is abundant. I will be graduating from Berkeley soon. PhD in Mathematics. The placements are going to be announced next week. The positions are: assistant professor at SF State, assistant professor at NYU, and lecturer at Rutgers University. Personally, I want the New York position.

My dog and I walk to a big tree that collapsed on its side. It is dark brown, and moldy. I climb on top of it, impressed by its size. Zippy hops up. I look at the slightly visible horizon. An arrangement of pink, red, and orange lights glow from the outer rim. Suddenly, I feel elation. I'm happy. The euphoria passes and turns into a giddy, half-pleasant, half-nervous ten minutes. Reality then, I sense, is different.

"Hey Zip!" I call afar. He comes running to me. They say that if you cut down a tree, the trees don't let you go inside the forest. *So once I cut down two trees and when I tried to go in they kicked my ass.* We go back the trail, and walk back to my car parked at the entry to the park. Zippy has dirt on his face. I feel anxiety. Stomach ache. My heart beats. I sense that I'm not right. We're back at the car.

Driving home, I turn on the radio. Static. Noise. Shhqrrrr, crrrrshhhh, William. "Huh?" I thought I heard my name. Shhqrrrr, crrrrshhhh, William. Finally, the radio is set to the classical music station. Gabriel Faure plays. As I approach my exit, I feel like I'm going to crash and throw up at the same time. I exit onto Dory Lane. I pull up to my building. Click. The gate to the garage opens. I'm back home.

The lights on, I take off Zippy's leash and leash-collar. I'm hungry. It's 6 pm. Dinner time. I microwave some chicken, potato, beans and rice. Medium-small sized plate. Uurn, William, uuuurrrnWilliam. Again, I hear my name. I thought the call was coming from the turning of the plate of food I put in the microwave. Food's done. I take out a pitcher of water from my fridge. I turn the TV on.

I have on the television channel 4. I'm watching the news. There was a fire at Tressel road. A home burned down, killing an adult and one child. William. The TV now; I'm shocked. I grab the remote and turn the TV off. Nothing. It's quiet in my living-room. Zippy barks. Loudly. "Hey Zip," I tell him soothingly. "What's going on bud?" I pet him. He goes back to his tiny couch-mattress.

At night I had trouble sleeping. Third day. I woke up two times in the middle of the night, unable to doze off. *One night I couldn't fall asleep so I ascended asleep.* I took a Nyquill and dozed off. Shhhhhh, William. A whisper? I couldn't tell. The Nyquill had kicked in. I dreamt of a blue sky with white clouds and a rainbow going through the sky. In the dream, I was flying a kite at the beach. The kite was green colored.

My graduation is today. In the morning, I showered with cold water. Then I had breakfast, a bagel with cheese, an orange, and some soybean milk. For some reason I began to think of people from my high school. The other day, I saw Ricky. My thought was that Ricky would show up to my graduation ceremony, to see his sister (unlike Rick, she is quite intelligent) and dump cold water on my head while he was there.

Graduation ceremony. No Ricky. My family is here. My father, my mother, and my little brother. "Hey mom," I say, seeing my mother in the crowd. "Hey Willie!" my mom replies. "I'm so proud of you, William" she adds. We hug. I see my brother. He got accepted to Stanford recently. "Hey David" I tell David. "Hi William" David coolly responds, "Did you get your placement yet?" David asks.

"No placement yet" I tell him. "End of this week. Probably NYU." "Congratulations!" my father, joining our family group. "Thanks pa." The ceremony begins. My last name is Bellacruz, so I I'm up quite soon. I'm backstage with my small family. My name is called, Pomp and Circumstance plays in the background. Wooh! The crowd cheers. I'm very happy. Then, I feel nervous seconds. What's not right? I ask myself.

My father takes us to a dinner afterwards. An Indian cuisine. I had never eaten Indian food so I ordered what my little brother tells me is the closest to American. I end up eating what seems to be a sort of filled tortilla bread with meat and spices. Next to a rice with spicy sauce. "How's your work son?" asks my father. "Fine," I say, "very productive." "Hey David, have you decided on a major yet?" I ask my brother David.

"Yes. Biochemistry," replies David. David is wearing a gray suit with, what seem, new black shoes from Allen Edmonds. I'm wearing a navy blue suit, with a blue and yellow stripe tie. "Oh cool Dave. Nice suit, by the way." "Thanks," says David. Growing up together, I would tutor David in math and English. Later, when I went away to college, he began studying extra-hours on his own. He's a pretty cool kid. 4.0 GPA.

After dinner, we head altogether to our parents' home in Hayward, two cities over from Berkeley. It's a big white house, two-story, with near-perfect front lawn and backyard grass that my father maintains closely. We stopped by my apartment to pick-up Zippy. He runs into the property, barking and jumping, his white-mottled coat noticeable by the fading sunlight. "Hey dad," I begin, "I need to talk to you."

"What's going on Will?" asks my father. "Since two days ago, I've experienced anxiety for no apparent reason. I get a sense of impending doom. Then I feel elation, euphoria. And every now and then I hear a voice." "Sounds rough, Will, have you set an appointment with a doctor?" my father. "No, not yet." "Well, if you're OK now, we can watch the game and later I can drive you home. What do you say?" "That's fine dad."

We're watching a Giants baseball game at my parents' house, in the living-room. Huge flat Panasonic. 7th inning. Mother comes in. Offers food. "You want nachos, Willie?" "No thanks mom." "You, William?" "Yeah, sure Marie." She brings out a bowl of nachos with yellow cheese and bell spice strips. YES! My father claps. The Giants have hit a home run. He's into the game, excited. My father has always loved baseball.

We would go with my family out to eat at restaurants and watch games there when I was more young. *When I was fourteen my father ordered a steak so rare that the cow was still alive.* The game was over, Giants won, time to go home. "OK, got your stuff Will?" "Yes." "OK, let's go." I got into my father's car. A dark blue Mazda. My dad turns on the radio as we head on the freeway to my apartment in Berkeley.

"Take care, William. Call the doctor and let us know what happens, OK?" "OK dad. See ya'." "See you soon Will." It's 10 pm. I'm tired. Zippy goes to his tiny mattress-bedding to sleep. I take a cold shower then head to bed in my room after brushing. I sleep well tonight. In my dreams, I am in the sky. There's a little rainbow. I can see the cities below me. Then I'm in the sky, but it's night time. I can feel the wind, it feels cool."

Morning. I shower with cold-water, dress, eat breakfast. Then I call the doctor. "Hello?" "Hi, this is Dr. Young." "Hi this is William Bellacruz." "Oh hey William, how are you?" "Fine except for one thing. I've been having some psych. problems." "Tell me, William, what have you been experiencing." "I've been having bouts of anxiety, and some insomnia. Every now and then I hear voices call my name."

"Sounds tough, William." "Can you come in tomorrow at 2 pm? I can ask more questions then and possibly refer you to a psychiatrist." "Sounds fine doc. Thanks." "OK William see ya' tomorrow." "Bye." I hang up the phone. I put on my crewneck sweatshirt and head downstairs. I check the mail. YES! Placement envelope. YES! NYU! "Dear Dr. William Bellacruz, you have been registered as assistant professor at New York University in New York."

"Congratulations, signed, University of California, Berkeley Mathematics department." My cell-phone rings. Expecting Michael, I answer. "Hey! Did you get yours?" "Yes," I reply. "NYU." "You?" "SF State." "Congrats dude." "Yeah, let's go out later in the evening, to celebrate." "Sure, where do you want to go?" The Chinese restaurant at Telegraph, I suspect. "Chinese. Telegraph" says Michael Randall, PhD. "OK, see ya there... at 7?"

"Err, how about 8?" asks Michael. "I have to pack, I'm getting ready to move." "Sounds fine, see ya'." "See ya'." Michael Randall was in the program with me. He went to Caltech for undergrad. I went to Berkeley for undergrad. He is a little bit shorter than me, wears silver glasses, and likes to read science fiction. I like to read science fiction as well. Science fiction on my mind, I go to my desk and read Philip K. Dick novels for hours.

It occurs to me that I should get ready to move as well. I don't know where I'll be staying first. Probably a shared room. I look up on Craigslist.org rooms in New York City. I look up and down the list. Rooms for \$500, \$600, \$700, \$800. Finally, I decide on a large room, furnished with what seems to be a modern, slim, wooden Ikea desk, a lamp and a bed. OK. Great. Now I need a book case and I'm set.

I go down to the parking lot to my car. I'm headed to Ikea. There's an Ikea in Emeryville and I head there. It's a big blue building with yellow letters. I go in. A cool breeze from the AC hits me as I go in. It looks pretty big inside, bigger than how it looks from outside. I head to the part of the store that has the book-cases. It's been a while since I've been here. The last time I was here I bought a small fridge during my undergrad.

Finally, I decide on a white, wooden bookcase for \$100. I pay, have it brought out to my car, and leave home. On the way home I'm listening to Buddy Holly and the Crickets. I sing: Oh boy! When you're with me! The world can see that you were meant for me! The stars appear and the shadows are falling, you can hear my heart a-calling! A little bit a-lovin' makes everything right I'm gonna see my baby tonight. Once home, I pick up the PKD novel, *A Maze of Death*, and continue to read.

7 pm. I start to get ready to see my friend Michael at the Chinese restaurant. First though, I check out my new book-case again. It's in packaging and I plan to keep it like that to put it in my room in New York. It was a good Ikea deal. *When I was young, my mother told me to make my bed so I bought some wood and took out my father's tools.* To my trip to New York I will be taking the standard mathematics reference textbooks.

I go to shower with cold water, dress, then set new food for my dog Zippy. Then I leave to the Chinese restaurant on foot. Once I get there a couple leaves, opening the door for me. My friend Michael is there. "Hey bud," I say. He is seated, wearing a button-up oxford shirt tucked into khaki pants. "Hey William." I'm hungry. Ten minutes in. We're having our dinner. Orange chicken, fried rice, white rice, noodles, and egg rolls.

After dinner, we part. I check my cell-phone for the time. It's 9:12 pm. Night-time. The street lights glow, illuminating the sidewalk and car road. An orange shade to everything, due to the color of the street light bulbs. I walk down a tree lined street. It's quiet and I can hear my footsteps. Cars go by occasionally. Woosh, they make. William. Ssssst. William. Oh you again, I think, go away. Nothing. I take a cold shower before I sleep.

The next day I go to my doctor's appointment. Doctor Young comes into the hospital room I am in. "Hey Will," says Dr. Young, extending his hand to greet me. We shake hands. "Hello Dr. Young." "So what seems to be the problem, Will. You told me you've been having some anxiety and insomnia?" "Yes, doctor, I think I may need medication, as much as I don't really want to." "Well, when did the problems start?"

We continue talking and I get a referral appointment to a psychiatrist so that he can interview me and, most likely, Dr. Young suggested, get medication. "Thanks doc," I end and go about my day. Mostly packing, walking Zippy, and preparing to move away to the East Coast. I need to figure out if I can take Zippy. I somehow didn't take this into the consideration of the room. I check the listing, and it says 'pet's OK.' Zippy is going to NY too!

I go for a walk. It's 5 pm. Graduation ceremony was two weeks ago. I've been reading science-fiction, most of the time. Trees, thick with green leaves, line the streets. The wind blows about. The sun is orange-pink and its golden light is filtered by houses, trees, and buildings. I walk, thinking over what I'm going to do when I get to New York. I walk and I take in colors, scenery, the outlines of shops. I feel slightly sluggish, 1 mg Risperidone.

I go into a shop to buy a coke.

"Hey Bianca."

"Oh hey William!" she responds. I haven't seen Bianca since high school. I only recognize her because she has her hair parted like she did in high school. I sort of had a crush on her then. "Where do you work?" she asks.

"Oh, I'm not working now, but I will be start to teach this fall."

"Nice." She says, adding: "I work as an bank analyst."

Parting, "Goodbye," I say, choosing to walk instead of conversing. I continue to walk up a hill. Walking. I love it.

The medication I'm taking is Risperidone. My psychiatrist diagnosed me with schizophrenia, paranoid type. It didn't really hit me. That is, I'm not worried very much about my health. The voices did stop. No random name calls. I updated my father on news of my health. He joked, hey maybe David can find a compound to treat your illness. I laughed. I leave to the East Coast in three days.

I begin to walk home. At a light, there is a person passed out near the crosswalk. Drunk, I assume. Then a car goes by, almost running the wasted young adult over. *Dr. Einstein's son, Einstein Jr., got a ticket once for driving at the speed of light.* The colors of the street stand out to me. Orange. Brown. White. Blue and pink, from neon signs. There is art on walls. I think I'm going to miss this city, even though it has been a solitary stay.