

The Dream Happened Two Hours Earlier Than the Event

The following account, taken from Louisa Rhine's collection, is an example of a realistic dream. It was provided to Rhine by the district manager of a sheet and tin plate company. The experience occurred shortly before he and several business associates were to return home from a two-week vacation in the wilderness, where they had been cut off from all news sources.

The night before they were to return home, the district manager had a dream, so clear, so vivid, he could not sleep afterward. In it, he writes, "one of our locomotive cranes that was unloading a car of scrap iron, together with the car, was on the track near the bank of a river alongside the water tower which served the locomotives. For some unaccountable reason, as the huge magnet swung around with a heavy load of scrap, it suddenly toppled over the river bank. The operator, whom I called by name, jumped clear of the crane and landed below it as it came bounding, tumbling and bouncing down the river bank, and he finally disappeared from view as the crane came to rest twenty feet below at the water's edge. I particularly noted the number of the crane and the number and positions of the railroad cars, and was able to tell how the crane operator was dressed. Furthermore, I noticed the approximate damage done to the crane. I did not know, however, what had finally happened to the operator. He had disappeared under or behind the crane after it had come to rest. In other words, I was observing the accident from somewhere in or across the river.

"Upon my return to the mill the following day, the first man I met was the master mechanic. He told me to come with him to inspect the crane of my dream, to talk with the operator who had emerged from the accident without a scratch. The operator explained his lack of injury by the fact that the crane had fallen over in front of him as he made his last jump and as it made its last bounce. The record showed the smallest detail to be as I had dreamed it, with one exception. The exception was that the accident had happened two hours after the dream" (Rhine, 1961, pp. 43-44).

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