

## Allah's Garden

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and inequities of my legal experiences pale beside the abuses Azeddine has undergone. The cold and snow seemed serenely inoffensive from my warm room when viewed in the light of the miseries of roasting Sahara days and freezing Sahara nights. Even the oft-proffered vision of economic collapse is nothing compared to the brutal and chaotic political situations in Allah's Garden.

There are many reasons to read Allah's Garden: It's a fast-paced and well-written adventure story with few equals, especially as it's true. The warmth of the regard between author and subject is a palpable presence, effusing the reading experience with a tenderness uncommon in such stories. Additionally, this book delivers a slice of life in another culture, bringing readers more global awareness. For these reasons too, I recommend it particularly as a restorative therapy.

I invite you to take this cure. I invite you to this page-turning book. You will never forget it or its effect on you. I know I won't.

*Allah's Garden*, by Thomas Hollowell, Tales Press, 2009 is available at Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, or [www.thomashollowell.com](http://www.thomashollowell.com).

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## My Dreamtime Helper

Over the past five years a famous actor has made frequent guest appearances in my dreams. You probably know him. He has been in numerous hit movies, including Austin Powers 3, Batman Returns and Twins. Can you guess his identity? It's Danny DeVito.

Until he started showing up in my dreams, I did not think about him very much. But once I began deciphering the meaning behind his dreamtime appearances, I realized Danny's rise to stardom held important pointers I could use to achieve my goals. (After spending so many nights together, I feel comfortable calling him by his first name.)

Before I tell you what I learned, let me share the latest dream where Danny played my co-star. In my dream, Danny offered to critique my manuscript. As I searched for a copy, all I could find was an old printout with lots of red marks and edits covering the pages. My inability to locate a fresh copy sent me into a state of frustration and embarrassment. While I engaged in self-flagellation, Danny calmly walked over to my computer and printed out a fresh copy.

Having participated in a dream group for 14 years, I knew right where to go for help on deciphering my dream. When I shared my



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dream at the next meeting, I was surprised to learn that I had strong opinions about Danny. Before I began digging into the meaning of my Danny DeVito dreams, I would have said I had little knowledge about the actor. But I was wrong.

My dream group regularly uses a lot of questions to uncover what dream characters or symbols mean. One of our favorite questions is, "If I was from Mars and had never heard of \_\_\_\_\_, how would you describe him/it to me?"

When I was asked that question about Danny, I immediately said he is about 5-foot tall, overweight, balding and he has a strong New Jersey accent. After rattling off that list, I realized those are not typical traits of a Hollywood actor. He could have easily failed to find acceptance or work. It took a lot of chutzpah for him to break into acting. But he overcame

the odds and became a star.

As the words tumbled out of my mouth, I understood Danny represented my ability to overcome obstacles that are blocking pathways in my waking life. Having him stroll into my dreamscape was a sign that if I kept moving in the direction of my goals, I could beat the odds and succeed. My job was to mirror Danny's most admirable traits: belief in oneself, a clear focus and stick-to-itiveness.

Since he began playing a key role in my dream landscape I did a little research on the Internet. There I learned that Danny has acted in 105 movies and TV shows (remember Taxi?), as well as produced and directed dozens more. And, although he breaks every stereotype for debonair leading men, he has successfully played that role in movies like *Other People's Money* and *Ruthless People*, as well as other films.

After processing my dream about the manuscript with my dream group, I saw that Danny's presence also served as a warning sign. I have been giving my inner critic, that part of myself that loves pointing out what is wrong, too much power. Instead of listening to her badmouth my writing, I need to bring a fresh, positive attitude to my work. Rather than dwelling on potential rejection, I need to keep writing, rewriting and submitting my work to editors. Danny's dreamtime visit showed me that if I persevere I will fulfill my aspirations.

Sometimes, even with my dream version of

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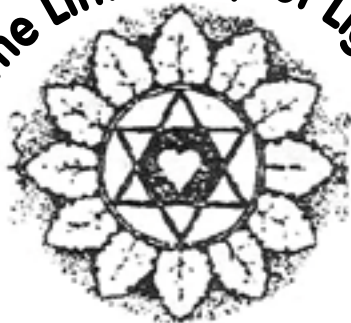
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