

The alarm clock rang.

With that inconspicuous announcement, Timothy Díaz, middle school science teacher, rose from his bed. Today was the day. That day. The day circled on his calendar for months. Today he had an appointment.

With the jitters that signal the coming of extraordinary moments in one's life, Tim began to prepare for this appointment. He recalled the difficulty of even getting in touch with the researchers from the university, their confusion at his vague description of the need for this meeting. Tim brushed his teeth, nervously avoiding eye contact with himself in the mirror, every day now worried that he may not recognize the man staring back. But that was foolish. He knew that. It has been months since *it*, or anything resembling *it*, had happened. That business last week, that didn't count. He wasn't even sure it was related. In fact, the more he thought about, he was quite convinced that there was no connection. Tim chanced a quick glance into the mirror. Still himself. That was a good start.

An hour later, Tim sat in his car. Stuck in traffic. He could not help but be struck by the irony of it, such a mundane and commonplace way to start an extraordinary day. Of course, it wasn't long until that traffic became a genuine imposition. Tim was anxious to meet the researchers. The longer he waited, the more the doubts built up in his mind, bringing the worst of his fears creeping forward. Seeing the researchers made this real. It would no longer be a secret of his, and his alone. His opinion would no longer be the only one, and, if he was being honest with himself, there was still that fear that he would learn only that his mind had snapped. He was hallucinating. Or he might not be able to do it with the researchers watching. Or they might label him as dangerous, or have him

arrested or identified as insane. What if the only thing to come from this risk was a padded cell and a white jacket?

No. No, that sort of thinking was not helping. Tim shook the thoughts from his head, trying to focus on the road, the music, the clouds outside, anything else. He had made his decision to go through with this. He had to. He owed it to himself to know if this was...anything. Still, that lingering doubt echoed through his mind. What if it's all in your head? Tim shook the thought away again and returned to his internal diatribe against the traffic.

But he knew the doubt was still in there. He hadn't fooled himself into genuinely disposing of it and like a shadow it enshrouded the back of his mind. The traffic wasn't moving. Tim nervously glanced over at the passenger seat, and the stack of notebooks he had brought for the researchers. He looked back to the road. Still not moving. He glanced again at the notebooks. Finally, after one last quick scope of the road, he took a deep breath and focused on the top notebook. For a split second, nothing happened. Then the notebook lifted gently into the air, and floated there.

A honking horn snapped Tim back to the present and the notebook crashed back into the pile, knocking the other binders to the floor. The traffic was moving. Tim smiled. It was still real. He still had super powers. It was time to show somebody.