**The Dream Asylum**

The Dream Asylum was not a nice place. It was a tall, concrete building that occasionally oozed a sinister blue light and never had the same number of floors as before. There were hardly any windows and they often changed position. It was almost as if the entire building rearranged itself when no one was looking, a playful child intent on making the adults doubt their sanity.

The whole Asylum was built for one purpose: giving the 'treatment'. The 'treatment' was a brilliantly clever idea, so well thought out and planned that nothing could ever go wrong. Of course, similar people had claimed the Titanic was the 'unsinkable ship'.

In principle, it was perfect. You'd have a bad dream, the horrifying type that harasses you night after night, and simply sell it to the Asylum. Your dream is gone, never to return, and you get paid for it. Perfect, right? Or, that was the idea. In reality, people began selling good dreams, (as those are worth far more) for a little extra cash. Or they began scoffing cheese before they went to bed, hoping for a nightmare they could part with.

Of course, an idea so perfect and wonderful simply had to go wrong at some point. People who had sold their dreams began getting side effects, ones they hadn't been warned about, ones that made their thoughts dangerous and terrifying. Soon, the Asylum even began taking dreams you didn't want to sell; your family holiday at the beach or when you learnt to ride a bike. The Asylum became its own person; a building that suddenly didn't need staff to operate the machines anymore.

Then, it wasn't just taking dreams; it was taking memories too. People left the building with a wad of cash and no idea who they were or how they came to be there. The worst part about the Dream Asylum, though, was that no one realised how dangerous it had become until it was too late. The damage was done; thousands of people wandering around without a clue as to who they were or what had happened to them.

It was shut down, supposedly. The plan was to knock the building down, pave over the foundations. But somehow, the planning always got delayed, until suddenly it was as if the planning was never there to begin with. The building remained, oozing its new blue light.

As time went on, it became part of the landscape, just another building in the background. Occasionally mothers used it to scare their children; 'If you don't behave, the Dream Asylum will reopen and gobble you up!'

People soon forgot the horrors the Asylum caused; it was easier than remembering.

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| **Text Title: The Dream Asylum.** | | | |
| Find and underline the words | **Bronze (5)** | **Silver (7)** | **Gold (10)** |
| Sinister, Occasionally | Oozed, unsinkable, principle, sanity, nightmare | Scoffing, wad, harasses |
|  | Find and copy a word that suggest the building was an unwelcome sight. | | |
|  | The author states ‘similar people had claimed the Titanic was the 'unsinkable ship' why might they make this comparison? | | |
|  | Suggest ways the story could develop - write a synopsis or summary for a story based around ‘The Dream Asylum’. | | |
|  | Why has the author chosen to write ‘the treatment’ using quotation marks around it? | | |
|  | What did mothers say to their children in order to frighten their children? | | |
|  | Draw a picture of the Dream Asylum based on the description in the text. | | |