



*Erratic Pain*

*A short story by Andreas Ingo*

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*I am a wounded man. My left arm is burned by a solid flame. Torn, wounded, sometimes bleeding. I lack a right eye. And of surprise my right leg is muscular, elastic, too young to represent my middle-age shape.*

*I have to be truthful.*

*I was once taken into a dark chamber where I almost lost consciousness. Someone was there. Watching over me. Whispering sibilant words in a foreign language. I couldn't see this shape with clarity.*

*Instead I had to guess about the meaning of the words. And somewhere in this dark chamber, lit by flashing lights, I guessed there had to be more of them.*

*Who did this to me?*

\* \* \*

*I am walking on a shore. Along a riverbed, that has evened out to become a silent remnant of something much larger. I sense the presence of prehistorical animals. Something is also seen, between lush bushes resembling something from remote islands. This is a Reaper, a two meter long lizard with a hammerhead shark head. It is breathing in the sunshine.*

*The waves from the ocean sweep along the sandy shore. And out there in the distant rests the island where I was born. It is a paradise island but with forces of give and take.*

\* \* \*

*As the sun descends upon the ocean I have finally made a fire upon a mountain plate separating from other plates of similar design. I have a knife that I make sharper with a stone. I spit in the fire. I watch embers of burning tree make their way up in the nightly air. A howling, or rather a shriek, can be heard from parallel plates looking like mine.*

*Now hard to see in the sunset.*

*I remember the occurrence in the dark chamber. How someone knocked me halfway unconscious. I sensed with a dull mind then. With a spiralling eye vision, distorted hearing and a tuff beat of heart.*

*The miracle was how these savages left me alive! I couldn't see the man properly. But he had to be longer than me. Imposing, dark, mysterious. And quite sadistic to tear my right eye away.*

*How could he leave me alive and also make something with my right leg?*

*It became younger.*

\* \* \*

*A week later I confront a group of small people growing weeds on a mountain slope. It is a sunny day. A day where the rays of the sun make silvery projections on the weeds the people are growing.*

*The people are walking clumsy. Their bodies are fully grown in the aspect of age. But they are much smaller and not entirely looking like humans. Large outgrowths can be seen along the legs of the species. Like outgrowths of cancer, a strange disease.*

*In a similar way their faces have small outgrowths too. As if they are using this to distinguish themselves from others.*

*I ask them concerning the imposing man tearing my right eye away. If they have seen someone like him. With the presence of several others.*

*"We are a simple race!" One of the small men says, "You better turn to the woman living east along the mountain slope." He says, "Maybe she has the answers."*

*"Can you not try to remember?" I ask once again.*

*"We have had memory." The small man says and take a sip of dry fruit.*

*I look at the dull faces of the small grown men. Children, not measuring more than twenty centimetres, walk along the others and they start to collect weeds and put them in baskets.*

*The whole gang of small people walk around the mountain plate. A green grass is growing along the weeds. The people themselves are living in cave structures within the mountain. But they are growing the weeds and some red plants along them to collect what is needed for daily digestion.*

*They are chatting with dull minds. Looking about trivia, looking out at the ocean and having some rest. And I start to talk to myself too. A silent chatter. About this uneven land of many opportunities.*

*On a journey to find my dark knight.*

*\* \* \**

*I stand to look at a small pond of water. A pond I previously searched for water species. Crawfish with six legs. Having a blue colour. A blue colour intersected with a pale blue. And dots of pale blue fragments along the top part of their bodies.*

*I look into the pond. Green strands of water vegetation make silent movements along the water. I see the face of a man that has a good looking shape. Thirty-five years old. A proud and reckless shape on a man that didn't amount to much on the paradise island. Giving up under group pressure. Succumbing under forces he couldn't control.*

*And I sense a dry and painful sensation from my left arm. Burned. Looking like charcoal. Small currents of blood pour from the burned surface of the arm. A pain. A vicious calling to surrender.*

*I talk to myself. I make myself become calmer. And I take some water vegetation to ease the pain of the arm. And I start to see the proud ways of my clothing. Having a black jacket made from the skin of island animals. I wear trousers too. In brown leather. Cut sharp and distinct from the tradition of a paradise island tailor.*

*In this land of horror and profound mysteries I calm myself down.*

\* \* \*

*The woman of rumour lives on a secluded area in between two cliffs. And a smaller cliff is seen some distance away too. And gives way for a pathway with trails from some prior procession.*

*The house is a house of wood. A pale grey colour. With flowery trunks growing along the pale sides of the house. The woman comes to greet me and has a beautiful looking face with a happy expression.*

*"Another mountain dweller?" The woman asks, "What can I do for you?"*

*"I have some questions." I start and I am shown inside the house for some coffee and a couple of cookies.*

*The house interiors are blessed with a certain scent of perfume from the woman. It is a scent of local flowers and herbs from the local supply. The walls of the house interiors are fused with stands of books with every topic I can think of.*

*"I am searching for a man." I start again, "A man that robbed me of my right eye." I say, "As you can see I'm halfway blinded."*

*"I know of black city dwellers." The woman says. "And I disappeared from my birth place with the company of my two children."*

*One of the two children emerge from the shadows of a nearby room. It is a young girl. Wearing a red costume as of festival time. It is beautiful.*

*The woman starts to tell me about black city dwellers. A force of power dictating the rules of the people of the mainland area.*

*"They used to take it easy in earlier periods." The woman says to me, "But they have started to impose control on people living close to the black city. You should see it too. It is quite a sight."*

*"These dark knights..." I say, "I guess some of them took my right eye and burned my left arm. But as a surprise he made something with my right leg. Making it younger. Do you know of things like this?"*

*"I certainly do." She says, "Take a look at my back!"*

*The woman turns a bit and removes the back side of her shirt. The back is an awful sight. A torn and blue area with pink and green patterns engulf her smooth skin. It is the product of torture. A decay of smooth and beautiful skin.*

*"So what can we do about it?" I ask.*

*"We can do nothing." The woman says, "I'm Cinderella Breden by the way."*

*I shake hands with the woman and exit the house to walk away a bit. I start to think about my enemy. The enemy of the dark chamber. An enemy with a twisted purpose. Why had I been exposed to his twisted imagination? Why me? Why the young leg?*

*The young girl in red costume and a boy enter the yard close to the house. And they walk up to me to show me their latest creation. It is a castle carved with knives from the local tree supply.*

*A castle complete with painted knights sitting on unknown creatures as they present their latest work to my surprise.*

*"It is not the castle of the black city dwellers." The girl says, "It is the opposite!"*

*"You made this castle all by yourselves?" I ask.*

*The castle is carved in wood decorated with multiple colours. As the sprouts have different colours than the rest of the castle. It has a huge main area section, with an oval shape. Connecting to the sprouts and the front garden. The place of the happy knights.*

*"We surely did." The girl says, "But we have made it a routine that everyone that passes by shall carve a knight to put in the castle."*

*"So you want me to carve a knight?"*

*"You have too!" The girl says, "Due to your chat and some cookies."*

*\* \* \**

*I'm walking away from the pale house. I'm wandering by myself to collect impressions from the surrounding area. It is a golden valley, that have sunken into the mountainside, to create something beautiful.*

*Red bushes with red berries grow here. I'm surrounded with the majestic shape of the afternoon skies. Where thunderous clouds with imposing shapes move majestically over the hot summer landscape.*

*They are thundering with a hint of angry power.*

*I descend a loose track that surely have been used by many dwellers in this mysterious land. And as I descend I come to see thorny shapes that resembles static hedgehogs measuring half a meter standing upright. But with an oval round shape. I look at them. I try to sense one of them with my right finger. But it starts to move. Making a threatening sound.*

*Several of them are standing in line, protected by the thorns. The thorns are measuring twenty centimetres.*

*I arrive at a clearing which leads way to a dark chamber. Not too different from the dark chamber I was pulled into before. And to my surprise I find a human skeleton upon the rocky ground. A beam of light emerges from the top of the chamber. It is drenched in a mysterious mist colouring the cone of light.*

*I start to sense I was pulled into this chamber before. I was lying on a platform that pulled at my back with heavy weight. And I start to picture the man from the torture event. The black cloak. The dark face. And so a sudden characteristic that made my heart beat: He was also beautiful. A handsome man with a pale face.*

*A pale face with the characteristic of an over man.*

*I walk up to a wall lit by the misty beam of light. And I start to read from a board on a wall:*

*It says: "So you finally entered. I look for you. I made you twist in agony. But the times of middle-age have come to an end. I look after you. We wait for you in the circles connecting you to future times."*

*I find a glowing sword along the wall with the board. A silvery sword made by some mysterious sword's master. I take the sword and exit the chamber. Using the sword to cut one of the oval hedgehog shapes in half.*

*I'm grilling it over open fire.*

\* \* \*

*Screams, loud noises!*

*The screams comes from the pale house with the woman and the two children. It is a horrid scream, a desperate call for help for three victims. I sneak over there. I observe a procession of dark knights riding upon black creatures. That mixes the look of camels with the long heads of giraffes.*

*I walk on the tip of my toes to enter the eastern side of the house. I must do this silently. And I hear a short and determined conversation. That the dark knights seek a man, a woman and two children.*

*I enter the front yard area with a profound anger in my middle-age heart.*

*"Why do you seek mountain dwellers, women and children?" I ask the dark knights in front of me.*

*"So we found you at last?" The dark knight says. "We will take you to the black city!"*

*The dark knights pushes me over into a black saddle. Cinderella Breden is pushed on another creature along with her two children. Not much more is said or done. We are taken against will by a horde of black knights.*

*The black creatures turn and move to the east.*

*We enter the black city with exhausted backs. Moving for hours upon a grey and slippery road. A road that must have endured many other processions. And we find a city with a beautiful looking entrance. A gothic stance. And a colourful net of opposing houses. With long sheets of patterned cloths that hangs from the balconies of the houses.*

*The people are moving as expected. Long slender bodies with pale faces. But also the recognition of male servants. In shorter height.*

*We are led to a huge castle. With a main area with corny sand. Around this main circle black walls and towers search for the skies. Where thundering clouds cut the top of the towers from eye vision.*

*"And here you find your chosen destination." One of the dark knights says to me. "We will bring you down under the surface."*

*"Why us?"*

*My question is met by silence.*

*\* \* \**

*The night is spent in a dungeon prison. Cindaressa Breden and her two children are put in one cell and myself in another. These cells connect to each other separated by iron bars. In the dungeon a fire is lit in the middle. Screams are heard from tormented prisoners. Also, black creatures resembling panthers are seen close to the fire.*

*These creatures have red stripes on their bodies and red heads with huge canines that stretches twenty centimetres down from their mouths. Sometimes a couple of guards throws rusted meat towards the creatures that swallows them whole.*

*Cindaressa and I get to talk a little as the fire in the centre sparkles with an orange glow:*

*"So what happened when you went by yourself to the coastal mountains?" I ask Cindaressa.*

*"My lover left me alone after a couple of nights of drinking." She says.*

*"But what was he like?" I ask.*

*"A drunken teenager." She says, "The work of a coming outlaw."*

*"In what way?"*

*"He had a knife and brown trousers." She says.*

*I look at the woman and instantly I start to remember... The green eyes... The well mannered speak and intellectual powers... It was the girl I once had sex with and left alone after a couple of nights of drinking.*

*Making her pregnant.*

*"It is you!" Cinderella says. "I now recognise the tone of your voice!"*

*"And the children?" I ask quite ashamed.*

*"You are their father Mike." Cinderella Breden says.*

*The night is tuff upon my tormented psyche. Being with my teenager lover in a dark dungeon supervised by lethal men. And becoming a father too. I advice Cinderella to take it easy. The children should follow their mothers advice. To breathe easily. To think constructive.*

*And to prepare for the worst as these guards hardly can be trusted.*

*But why leave us alive for so long at all?*

\* \* \*

*The next day is a scary awakening as we are pulled up along a staircase onto the corny sand which have been made into a place for gladiators. The children are separated from Cinderella and me.*

*I'm given a strange weapon. A long pole with solid iron beginning and end.*

*Cinderella are given a sword. The same sword I found in the dark chamber.*

*A lot of slender people have gathered around the circular area representing a battle ground for gladiators. They are sitting on benches overlooking the circular area for gladiators.*

*We await our enemy to the rear of black city inhabitants. They are chatting furiously. Chatting, making gestures, dressed in blueish clothing with strands of other colours. Laughing even.*

*And so the battle begins.*

*Dark clouds have gathered around the towers of the black castle. Flashes of ball lightning erupt from inside the clouds. Colouring the clouds in electric imagery.*

*The children are led away from us. Up onto the benches with the city inhabitants. Cinderella and I are left alone on the circular battle ground. And I instantly remember the words I read in the dark chamber:*

*"We wait for you in the circles connecting you to future times."*

*A huge creature, a Red Lion Spinx, enters the circular area on four legs. It is looking like the black creatures in the underground prison. But it is larger. The red stripes are seen but also combined with larger skin structures. With irregular shapes like bold regions making the stripes go around them in circles and connecting to a yellow head.*

*A burning yellow head coloured like fire.*

*Flashes erupt in the hovering clouds. A glowing sphere structure, measuring five meters marks the centre of the battle ground. People roar, some of them throws blue flowers upon the battle ground.*

*It is very surprising.*

*I have to think. But I can hardly think anymore. The Red Lion Spinx is imposing. A group of other prisoners are led upon the battle ground by a group of black guardians.*

*The Red Lion Spinx advance towards our position. The other prisoners, given ordinary spears, walk around it and try to push their spears along its direction. But the creature is malicious, cunning. The black city inhabitants roar when the creature advance towards the downtrodden prisoners.*

*And in the distance I hear the call of my children:*

*"Go around it!" They scream, "Use your pole to your advantage!"*

*And I instantly remember...*

*I remember the words spoken to me by the over man in the dark chamber. Words spoken in a language I couldn't understand. But I sensed the meaning behind the words. A strange dialect common to my born language.*

*"You didn't amount to much on the paradise island." He said with a hint of violence, "You couldn't handle group pressure and you couldn't see with your eyes fixed on emptiness."*

*I fix my eyes on the huge beast that walks around in circles, attacking some of the prisoners and three of them pushes their spears into the side of the creature. One of them is killed by its open jaws.*

*A thunder is heard once again and a rain starts to pour down on the two of us. On Cinderella and me. We fight close to each other. The creature walk around us. And I can't properly handle the pole.*

*We suddenly see that lightning erupts from the thundering clouds and sends currents of electricity down along cables connecting to the centre sphere structure. It is fused with the electricity of lightning and starts to shine.*

*I pull my pole against the sphere structure and fuse electricity into the iron beginning of my pole. Making the electricity pour into the pole and along an iron core towards the end. Where I hit the Red Lion Sphinx with the end of my pole that is paralysed by the electric chock.*

*And the group of other prisoners descend upon the creature to kill it with their spears.*

*The city inhabitants on the benches roar in standing ovation.*

\* \* \*

*Now Cinderella and I walk along a sandy shore. The same shore I entered when I left the paradise island to enter the coastal area of the mainland. We collect impressions from the waves that rise and descend as they move onto the beach and roll back into the ocean.*

*"I never could forget what you did to me in the past." Cinderella says to me, "But you was wild and I was drunken too."*

*"Was I a problem to you?" I ask.*

*"No." Cinderella says, "I love willful people."*

*We walk past a wreck and move into the rolling water. Wetting our legs and taking a swim in the salty water. The children are onto us too. They swim with us in silence. As they stretch their arms and legs to counteract the hard currents of the ocean.*

*We decide to go back to the paradise island. Not as an easy escape but rather to distinguish ourselves with our newfound knowledge.*

*"But how can we do it?" Cinderella asks.*

*"We have to build some kind of vessel." I suggest.*

*We enter the ocean with a raft built by wooden logs. But the waves crashes against to shore and the currents make the attempt hard to accomplish.*

*Moments later we are pulled under the surface by a huge water creature with a shape hard to see in the rolling water. Pulled down into the depths of the sea. The creature, now a little bit easier to see, is a black tentacle creature with a pulsating main body. That pulls its body due to muscle adjustments along its beige slippery shape.*

*I wrestle with the creature and pull myself up to the surface. I see the sun, I swallow salt water. And I scream a scream and desperately look for the bodies of my companions.*

*They can be seen.*

*One of the children screams to me. Cinderella emerges along my back and says she found something at the bottom of the ocean!*

*I stare into the blue abyss with blinded eyes.*

\* \* \*

*We enter a submerged structure with a sack of breath. Entering an area with air to breathe. Marbled stones can be found here. An artificial construct resembling high culture.*

*It is at once deserted, at once the home of some submerged ocean dweller. A creature, or rather a shape resembling a small man, meets us above the entrance. He is at first silent, then talkative in the vein of our firstborn language.*

*He has a strange accent. A modification of our own language.*

*"Strangers." He says, "You must be desperately seeking escape."*

*"We are." I say. "We just escaped a water creature."*

*When we have rested for half an hour and been subjected to an odd marine dish the half-man, half-creature wonders about our purpose. Why we came here and why we found his habitat under the water.*

*"We were going to the paradise island." I say, "But the ocean waves and the water creature stopped us in our track."*

*"I see." The man says, "I can tell from the look of you that you are playing against impossible odds. You need a refreshing look at your possibilities."*

*"We surely do."*

*"Then join me for a game of Bricks." He says to me, "I will tell you how to move further."*

*Gindarella and the children go down a marbled staircase and disappear into a darkly lit room. I can't see the interior of this room. But I guess from the look of the submerged structure that the aquatic man must be an intelligent man indeed. The roof is decorated with marbled arches made of stone. And the table for the game is made in a classic design resembling high culture.*

*The game begins after I have been instructed about the rules of the game. It is a board game. Pieces of reflective stones, made in opposing colours, make up the different sides of the game. Complete with a stone board where the pieces can advance towards victory or defeat.*

*I put force to my pieces and the game develops into a tuff lecture concerning the limits of my intellectual powers.*

*"You see." The aquatic man says after an expected victory. "You found a dark destiny due to your decadent youth. You couldn't see with clarity upon your chances and you never could see life as it played out before you. I say this with great conviction. The way of your play reveals the weaknesses of your heart. Of*

*your consciousness. Of your mind. You had to endure many tortures. To see the light on the other side of the coin. But to see life as a hero reveals many obstacles. And its only due to the board game that one can reflect upon life to see its meaning in golden colours. You have to rise once again. "*

*"But why do you say this?" I ask, "As I have been hunted by a man superior to me. A beautiful man but also a man of cruelty. "*

*"It is the black city dwellers. " The aquatic man says, "They search for weakness to destroy it or make it grow. "*

*I look down into the board game with the circular arrangement of stone pieces making a strange symmetry. My own pieces have been surrounded by the aquatic man's pieces. And they are found fragile in their surrounded condition.*

*"How have you endured?" I ask the aquatic man.*

*"I have not. " The man says with surprise, "You see. I have hard to see life from the right perspective. I play the game. I have built a submerged structure. Still I can't see with clarity upon my purpose. "*

*"I am surprised. "*

*"It is a mystery. " The man says, "Life is revealed due to opposites. And the game reveals secrets making the journey easier to understand. But this careful discipline 'To see.' is something I still haven't mastered. "*

*"I understand. "*

*The aquatic man is waving it off. Dressed as he is in a fine costume with a white shirt and a green tie. We descend the staircase leading to the darkly lit room. To our surprise we find Cinderella and the children lying in beds made for other*

*aquatic structure dwellers. Other water creatures (or would I say aquatic men?) also lie there snoring in the closed off space.*

*It is beautiful.*

\* \* \*

*Gindarella and I are back at the sandy shore. The children are left resting in the aquatic structure. We have been instructed that the wreck along the beach contains future equipment that will make it easier for us to move to the paradise island.*

*To our surprise aquatic suits, thrusters and helmets are found inside the wreck. Corpses are lying there. Resting, as they are, in wait for another kingdom.*

*We put on the aquatic suits. Equip ourselves with the helmets and the thrusters. And we move into the water, along with my silvery sword, to enter the ocean. And pull ourselves with future power in submerged condition up to the paradise island.*

*We enter the shore. And I instantly remember the beach I walked across at youth. The fishing spots. The rowing boats. The sailing boats with multiple pulling mechanisms, lying in a silent harbour. And some miscellaneous people walking with comfort upon tired legs.*

*We enter the forest leading to the plateau that is the place of the human village.*

*The forest is deep and thick. Chock full of orange plants and shrieks can be heard from recognisable monkey shapes. That rather are birdlike in their flowing movement between the trees.*

*The human village is looking quite similar as of before but details have changed. The plateau is brownish and chock full and slippery water holes. Where small creatures, looking like reptile carnivores, rushes away from our spooky walk.*

*And as we enter the main square of the village we see huge fishing nets mounted upon railings. Some fishermen use knives to kill large fish creatures. With emerald blue scales, green fins and red jaws.*

*Why this slaughter? Why the sense experience of suffering in the air?*

*It is revealed that the dark knight, the man exposing me to torture, to the burning of my left arm and the theft of my right eye, is directing business.*

*He is just standing there. Waiting for me. In the circle of the main square of the village. Brown soil, stinking dead fish and reptile creatures arrange a scene that is halfway past, halfway future.*

*"You made it." The black knight says.*

*He is handsome. Quite slender. Pale head. A dark robe with a black cloak. But he is also having a golden sword. He is two and a half meters long. An over man. A grotesque vision of something humans never can understand. But he also has personal traits. A long nose with a blue shade. Cheeks with red areas that runs with precise lines along the sharp features of his face.*

*He has a piercing look with blue eyes.*

*I take hold of the silvery sword to advance to his position.*

*"So you finally pushed beyond your previous state of consciousness." The black knight says, "I'm Revan Satyr and we will have a last duel. You and me. Cinderella can step aside."*

*We enter the clearing in the middle of the square. Other dark dwellers move aside to make space for our common duel. The dark knight directs his golden sword to the skies and we start the duel.*

*I fend off him. I pull myself closer. I step back. Our swords cling into each other by the movement of my right arm. Not the burned one.*

*Still it is painful.*

*"This is the secret." The dark knight says, "You were given a mission to push beyond your decadent condition to become a better man and to value life due to the impressions you found on the way. With tortures and blissful states. I gave you a young right leg to make you wonder and to start to see life as an absurd event in between opposites."*

*"But I still has to kill you." I say.*

*"To kill me or to die." The dark knight says, "And the meaning you seek, "The seeing", is just the neglect of positive thinking. To start to see life as a black plate of nothing."*

*"Is it just so?" I ask.*

*"I'm serious." The dark knight says.*

*The battle continues as I fall due to kicks from the dark knight. I fall to the ground, filthy pig shapes stare upon us as we battle for similar ground. As the dark knight has made the paradise island people suffer and catch fish for deliverance to the black city.*

*"I will not kill you." The dark knight says, "I will spare your life due to your twisted condition."*

*I don't listen to the man as he lifts his golden sword for the kill. I roll sideways, throws my silvery sword against his throat and it sticks as the dark knight sinks down upon the filthy ground.*

*He dies after another blow with the silvery sword. A gift from a certain swords master. And a glowing sword. Made stronger by black magic.*

\* \* \*

*I enter a harbour area on the north side of the paradise island. I see black city dwellers fight with locals and some of them fall dead to the ground. Their golden ships are burning. Their magenta sails hit fire and are consumed by hellish flames.*

*I walk upright in a new condition. A condition of conquest leading to a memory implanted by the dark knight.*

*That seeing is not truly seeing. That a true hero knows his limits. Limits to watch and observe life in polar opposites. But to value life in a mode of negative thinking. Erasing the thought: "Life is beautiful."*

*A gift from the mind of a dark knight.*

*THE END*