

“Journey of Death”, or: “The Strength”

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1,

Before I run out of ink I must write here that I escaped up to the no-mans-land of the mountains and the expanses during the perhaps most difficult time in the history of our country.

Perhaps some people rightly would call it a trace of pathological narcissism and not self-preservation, to vanish among the mountains simply to survive, and through surviving aim all ones soul-forces only on the sustaining of ones own life.

Of course I could have stayed and died for the already wasted country, but as I said: I came here instead, where my greatest pain is to, despite the vastness of this landscape, still be forced to live inside my own head.

From childhood I have been a seeker and a survivor, and I am one of those individuals who refuses to find that which I tell myself that I pursue.

I constantly search for the lost word.

Where is it?

I have looked among the mountains and into many tents I have peeked, without finding it.

One winter I found it. The sun was setting behind the eternal gray cloud-cover which had risen so far that I saw the burrow on top of Tolpagorni.

Then a gently wind was sweeping over the valley; the snow-shroud was rising up from the ground and danced its way forward and layed out new patterns in the fading, deep white snow-shroud, and I came to think of the turning of the year towards the eternal bright, and on how I would be able to hear the mooing reindeers and hold my food-bowl with my naked hands eating from it and bathing my weary feet in the ice water streams.

Suddenly I lost that winged moment.

I heard the breeze. The snow fell from the mountain-walls far away. I came to think that no path leads back. I left my home never to return. Enough was enough and it was not possible to live a human life in the south. For the women it was mostly because of the increasing numbers of rapes. I had no woman to protect. Perhaps I did not want to protect anyone, I don't know ...

It is strange. Even that I sensed before my escape: It was endlessly difficult to know anything for sure about ones true feelings. The only reasonable thing to do was to deny the existence of anything authentic at all and instead concentrate on that which I up to this point still think is doubtful: the value of surviving.

Several times a week, the silence here is torn apart by some of their bombers flying over the

mountains. Sometimes they come in formations, like migratory birds. This time of the year they are seldom seen because of the thick cloud, but their hard noise reminds me that I never fully can leave the country from which I came. I was a part of that which was emerging, and my money paid for the evil that was growing.

I write this with authentic ink, a sort that no one can read that I don't show it to. I still have some boxes left with this ordinary archive-proof ink. I need to be economic about the words and write small.

Every cartridge writes eight thousand meters each. How many pages can one write with eight thousand meters ink?

I don't know. How long my life will be, I don't know either.

What I do know is my view.

Tolpagorni is covered by the gray cloud-cover. I can not see any mountain-top anymore. For some reason I always feel heavy inside when I no longer can see the mountain-tops. It feels like the fog has won its victory; the fog that penetrates every body-opening and cools us down to the point of death.

2,

I have climbed to Kebnekaise's top-hut. I go here, not because it is brighter, but to prove to myself that I am a man, human, and grown-up! And that I never has ceased to be all this.

The clock-time has since long disappeared, but I remember that it used to take me between seven and eight hours to climb here during winter.

I sit half-naked on the wooden bench while my heavy blue clothes are drying up on the lines underneath the ceiling. I stare into the shining, gray-white kingdom of snow.

Up here nothing ever happens. If I had someone to joke with I would say that the only thing happening here is that nothing ever happens. I don't know when I learned to live with that nothing happens. The abstinence for happenings calmed down just like everything else calmed down, and what was left was some kind of void filled with light.

I plan on staying here for the night and sweep myself in the heavy wool-rugs that are scattered over the floor. I look at my writing, and I stare straight into the white-gray light. The thick fog is pressing towards the window as if it wanted to reach into the hut and eat me with its terrible chill.

My fingers around the pen are cold. The ink is floating poorly; I should save it.

Inside this top-hut I want to leave my notebooks. Here they will be safe. To this place people only reach who has kindness enough in their hearts to save human remnants.

If someone finds me where I live normally, I imagine that everything will go to waste. These notebooks will be burnt if they are found on a place where it is easy to reach.

I can not really account for why I think it will turn out like this; my thoughts must have changed very dramatically after my staying among the mountains.

Who was I before I came here?

If I stare long enough into the white-gray light it happens sometimes that some of my old memories are being activated, and that I end up in old times. As a youth, for example, I used to sit almost like this, by a table, and looked out through a cafeteria-window on the city-life that was going on during one of the many light rainfalls of autumn. The pearls on the window gave depth to the image; I saw red car-lights, the pedestrian crossing by the train-station, the people who were running around under their all to small umbrellas, everything made me think of myself as privileged. I was sitting inside in the warmth with a hot coffee-mug between the hands in a silently whizzing void, and for some inscrutable reason I was sucking every amount of pleasure out of this my student-existence.

What did I dream about? What did I think about life?

I don't remember.

Soon I was working as a doctor. To new acquaintances I often used another, more precise word. I said: "I am a abortion doctor", to see if anyone reacted on the perhaps contradictory statement, but they never did. My specialization I choose from purely pragmatical reasons that I don't want to go into; it was not out of idealistic reasons.

Sometimes I wish I had kept a journal. The reason for not taking notes was of course the advent and expansion of Internet, it was as if I lost perception towards the inner windows when I suddenly got access to an infinite numbers of external windows. There was also nothing interesting to be found within me, because I was what one perhaps a little bit contemptuously would call a "functional man", and my life was solely governed by my wish to find a place within the existing system, that (one should add this) was characterized by an increasing number of redundant people of all kinds; worn out people and worthless people that never could find a place within the system.

I was scared to death being one of them.

Before my nineteenth birthday I had my first depression which I still today can't understand the causes behind. I remember my father's comforting words when he, kind of motherly but still fatherly, with a much more mild voice than usual, said to me exactly what I needed to realize: *"You have to be prepared to become a tiny tiny part of a great machine, it is only in that way that you can ..."*

Suddenly I am interrupted in my thoughts by a fly running over the white sheet of paper.

A fly?

It is walking over the paper-sheet almost as if it were to be authentic. Then it lifts of quickly as in a lightening and flies towards the wall where it disappears. Like in the idiom.

I stand up to look for it, but without result.

My heart is beating hard in the chest.

I remember some of the conversations I heard from my friends who where educating to become social scientists. Many of them were occupied with researching about the existence of love in the modern

society. Was love made impossible? Was love lost?

Their arguments I don't remember, but I remember one young woman; after the dilatation and curettage she contacted me and wanted to speak about how she had been affected by our meeting. She felt gloomy, and her partner wanted to leave her without being able to give any reasons to why.

"It is so difficult to live", she said through the crying, which was declining already before it had started.

"There are many who say the same", I said. "Do you want me to send a referral to a psychiatrist?"

"Why?"

"Because ..."

I lost track for a moment, then I said: "Well, only you know ..."

"No, thank you", she said.

I thought it was weird of her to call me if she could not accept that I sent her on to someone who really could help her come into terms with her problem.

The strange thing was that she called me once more, two months later. Now her partner had been unfaithful and then left her, she said to me exactly what she thought: "All men who are unfaithful is it because they want to become as children again. They want to become like children and get rid of the commitment. Well, I guess he was simply alone with his abnormal desire ..."

The voice was laconic and tired, and hardly angry. It was just like she knew without knowing that which I too notice at a distance from everything.

Then she continued: "It was not possible to unite the role as woman and mother. He felt castaway."

New-born, I thought. He felt new-born.

"It is not the mens' fault that it is the mens' fault", I said.

She uttered a monosyllabic laughter which meant that she agreed.

I will not waste ink on this, but it is very hard not to. Many men went their own way and the same with the women. There was no way of merge them together, for all imaginable diplomacy between the sexes presupposed a certain amount of faith, and the faith was dependent on both promises and a certain measure of outlook into the future. To my eyes, it looked like the whole institution of promise had been punctured and with it all love-capital was disappearing from society in the most terrifying way. No one seemed to believe they were in need of anyone but themselves, and it was just this false basic security that undermined the reproducing of generations. Also all the good things, and basically uncorrupted that we had, was lost.

Strangely enough, I must nevertheless have kept my will to survive, perhaps together with some kind of want to transcend into my own ...

Suddenly I see something. It is emerging outside in the fog. A faint, blinking, green light; lamps attached on a shining white object.

A drone. With its cold dark-gray eye it slowly hovers towards the window of the hut. It stops, hangs

on the spot, then disappears quickly like in a flash of lightening.

I pull on my clothes, draw my knife from its holster and make my way to the door. I peek out. A faint humming sound can be heard. The drone is hovering in front of me beneath the stair up to the hut. It gives signal to me to follow.

Through the wind I can scent the presence of more drones.

Whoever controls these messengers it surely means that my solitary existence up here definitely is challenged, that means in turn that it doesn't matter if I will carry on living or if I die. It also means that I will follow this drone.

Obviously we are on our way to the top of the mountain. Even if I cannot discern as much as a stone, I feel the slant in my own body; we are on our way to the southern top.

3,

With my sweaty and exhausted body I force myself forward in the heavy snow-cover. Probably I look weak, like a pen which loses its last ink. Confused, clear thoughts run through my warm brain. I think of that the mountains don't have any faces, but just dumb, ice-cold backs, and that I am cast out from their slow speech and that the only thing I know about is the first syllable in an unknown word. And I think of how the snow here reminds me of huge amounts of sugar which I get to tread upon without ever eating.

I stop. The top is ten meters ahead., it is marked by an hardly distinguishable transition between the white light of the snow and the light of the fog.

There is still a buzzing sound in the air. The drones are still hovering behind me. Maybe I can feel what their presence really means, even if the thought has not yet been clothed in words and been revealed to my consciousness.

A dark-gray figure is visible at the top. He comes walking on the narrow mountain-chine of snow which leads from the northern top to here.

Around his head there are blinking lights.

He stops, then he calls my name. I confirm to him that it is me, and ask no question. Why would I give him the honor of showing him my confusion? Don't I already know what this is all about?

“You are a survivor!”, he shouts to me.

I don't protest. He comes next to me.

“What are you pursuing with your stay here?”

I say nothing.

“You don't want to answer me? Perhaps you *cannot* answer?”

When I don't answer him he laughs, almost as if my presence made him nervous.

“You are a smart guy! But you will not get away from this ...”

His face comes closer to mine. Probably he should have whispered the words, but now he speaks

them plain and clear, the same moment as the buzzing from the drones comes closer: “You will see what it is you are searching for ...”

He nods towards the snow at the mountain-top.

“You are here to build a bridge over to the next top.”

He makes a gesture so that I will understand that I am that bridge he is speaking about.

“And if I fail?”

“Then you will fall down from the cliff. Believe me, you will think many thoughts before you are scraped and crushed against the rocks ... Do you know already what you will think?”

I feel the inherent irony to the question; I don't answer.

Behind his right ear, I see a black fly sitting motionless.

“Come, let's go closer!”

We walk the last part towards the top where we stop.

“You cannot see the scarp because the fog is everywhere.”

I stare before me and only see what I have always seen.

“Why did you want to monitor me?”, I ask.

“I think you can figure that out by yourself. You are a survivor.”

And in my thoughts I fill in: “one who should have become non-human, but who during the most difficult circumstances remained a human being and escaped in self-preservation into what looked like desolate ground.”

I stare before me into the bright sea of fog. I know that one from here use to be able to see endless expanses if only the weather is clear.

The scarp is terrible. Many times I have thought of the people of whom it has been told that they fell from here. Their screams must have sounded horrible. Who is not secretly drawn to such sounds, from people of no return who are suddenly hit by their own journey of death?

I spit into the fog. In vain.

“Don't care about the drones, or any other individual for that matter. Go now!”

I do as he tells me and takes the first step. The second follows without any problem. Three, four, five, and so on. I know what cliff is at my side without seeing it. And I know why drones are buzzing around my miserable body. My life is being captured by them. My life, which I have tried to save, is being formed into entertainment made for all the endless screen-addicted human beings in the civilized world. I know that these drones will find my notebooks, I know that my innermost, up to now, will be showed of in the most grotesque manner, before the millions of hungry individuals slumped down in their fuggy homes, and whose homeless souls greedily are looking for some miserable human being to look down on. Here you have me! Take me!