

NAMES: UNSONSELVITZSOL

By M. Amanuensis Sharkchild

An amount of seasons befell me that I could not count before I became free. And surely it was an amount less than I would have thought, for time lingered awfully slow within the cool, decrepit cell of my prison holding. I did not mark the days and I did not note the moon when it could be seen. My thoughts and my pain were the only troubles I ever had dealings with, and I rather disliked both of them. I was not a complex man, especially during this time, and spent almost all of it in one of two disturbing states.

The first state: Hooded guards would take me once every seven days and bind me to a floor beneath the open sky while the sun singed the flesh of my back, arms, and legs. On each day thereafter, I would be strapped to a concrete table in the depths of where my holding lay. Indescribably, the hooded guards would pour hot water upon my burn wounds, inflicting a pain greater than anything that denied death as they plagued upon my essence with no apparent motive. And on the days following that, I would be flogged several times. They would have continued on beyond a handful of lashes, but my dead flesh freed much too generously and sickeningly under each strike. If I could have ended the butchery under any circumstances, I would have done so gladly.

The second state: During those moments of my pitiful refuge, I would lie quite still, tucked against the wall of my cell, playing imaginary music to the rhythm of splashing water made by my fingers slapping upon small puddles. The action calmed and distracted my thoughts, allowing me to soak in the sorry scrap of my life left to live. I would have rather done other activities, but any other movement would have horribly ravaged my wreckage of a body and caused excruciating pain.

There was not much else that made up my days, other than the dust that sought across the vestiges of air to find haven upon mass and those sounds of my moans and music that crawled fatigue-stricken through the cracks of impossible escape. I had nothing to hang on to. Any love that had once been in my life was long past replaced by forlorn bitterness and buried deep within the caverns of my hardened heart. All that kept me living was a hellish spell burned to my insides, breaking me and changing me.

The reason for my imprisonment was in actuality a quite sinister yet simple matter. There were certain things that had come by residence within the community of my soul. It was these things that harnessed the power to overturn the sanctity of peace, of tranquility, and of beauty. By a perchance eavesdropping, I acquired these thorns in my unwelcoming side.

I was staying on the third floor of a hotel in a city I had traveled to on business. I left my room in the middle of the night to get some ice from the machine at the end of the hall. On my way back from the machine, I heard an overture of languages and speech emanating from one of the rooms I passed; some sounded human and others did not. Thinking it foolish to stand outside and listen, let alone place my ear upon the very door of the room, I decided to continue walking and avoid any unneeded confrontations. But, as I walked by, a loud, ominous voice became savagely audible long enough for me to take one brief phrase to memory.

“Its name is evil indescribable. It will come if you speak it: Unsonselvitzsol.”

The name that was spoken swirled about the air around me before entering my ears in a surreal capsule of time. As if the word were tangible, it slithered through my insides and pulsed within my brain. Letters immediately started to manifest within my mind to accompany the sound of the name as a word, and eventually one was formed so it could quickly be branded to the deepest core of my being.

I hurried to my room and hoped to quickly fall asleep, but sleep did not come, not that night. I could not get the words I had heard out of my mind. They toyed with my thoughts and begged me to imagine the appearance of the inside of the room from which I heard them. I imagined creatures of the night communing with demented men, forming covenants to prolong their works and propagate their machinations. I imagined candles burning stronger than natural, wax curling, pooling, and dripping from their holders. I imagined the being that had spoken the words of my acquirement, its mouth different than anything I could picture, expanding air with unusual vibrations to create the pitch and tone that so clearly pierced my ears. My heart raced and my mind churned.

When the sun rose, I was still restless and in disarray. Panic was gripping me with its elongated fingers and anxiety coiled about me like a hungered reptile. I gave in then to the desperation scorching me within and spoke the word ingrained in me. I spoke it slowly, perfectly, enunciating flawlessly each sound and syllable.

“Un-son-sel-vitz-sol.”

As soon as the word had left my lips, it was gone. I could not remember it; I could not recall one portion of it—not one piece. Like tape, it was ripped from my flesh and being, leaving only the empty space of which it had just filled. But that emptiness was only there for a moment, for something came into me and replaced it.

Throughout the course of the day, I could not relax. Every word I spoke and every step I took was perceived to be monitored, and in return, every decision I made that led to such actions felt intensely wrong. It was as if my will was not my own and that everything I did was against the innate, natural essence of myself. The feeling was maddening, but even more maddening still was my inability to remember that name which I spoke to bring about my mental anguish.

As the sun set that evening, I began to feel stronger and more confident in my actions. My thoughts were changing. My composure, my demeanor, my inconspicuous nuances—all of them began to change. Even my choices of words were starting to change. I was transforming, and I was doing so very rapidly.

While transitioning from one person to another, I could vividly recall the pieces of my older self, easily identifying the striking differences that widened the gap between a hunch of hallucination and the prick of reality. I welcomed the new self and hoped only to aid it in its arrival.

However, when I returned to my hotel room, I saw for the first time the hooded fiends. They were waiting for me, at least ten of them. The hoods they wore were ragged and wretched things, covering their eyes, but allowing sight to see their wayward tongues that flapped about untamed within their mouths. Every one of them rushed me without hesitation and bound me with rope. I was in no position to defend myself.

The next thing I knew were the dimensions of my cell, and not shortly thereafter, the gruesome pattern of my agony began.

When my mind was brought to its knees through the tribulations of my exile, it reacted; not in the expected course of folding, but by unfolding, like the delicate petals of a rose growing outward and apart, one by one. Because my physical body could not perform, my mind picked up the slack to maintain balance. Just as the blind listened and the deaf visualized, my mind acquired and heightened features that were before passive.

One such enhancement was the growth of my imagination. It became more controllable than the dexterity of fingers, and with it, I was able to coax the world around me into things unreal. I could make the hooded guards women with alluring appearances, the sun a waterfall that rained down the freshness of life, and the pain a spirit soaring beneath my flesh with the gentle touch of encouragement. Within these blessed fantasies, I could forget the present and enjoy the cruelties of my immurement. But, no matter how lost I got in the reveries, I had to come back to the pain—for often I craved it.

Another enhancement still, or trait for a better word, as my diagnosis gradually digressed further and further from normality, was the sustaining of consciousness without sleep. My body thinned, my muscles dissipated, and my heart slowed, but I never grew tired. Throughout the course of each day, there would be phases when I entered into a state of cognitive REM. Though open, my eyes scattered in both light and dark; my retinas seemed to connect directly to my mind's eye, discharging phenomenal visions of color and amazement. My mind was working like an engine, fueling my attention with dreams atop my already occurring sight. This was surely my existence's defying denouncement of sanity.

The third and final enhancement was the inflow of historical knowledge. Experiences and images became my own as if I were already a part of them. I learned of princes of lands known and unknown, and of things greater than words. I learned of the unkind beasts and the nautical wayfarers. The entire mass of things that entered my head was treacherous and detestable. They made me desire to do horrible things beyond my capacity; they drove me from my usual routines and caused me to roam my holding atop the paralyzing pain. I ran into walls, I kicked the door, and I screamed in awesome rage. It felt awful and euphoric all the same. In that moment, I came alive.

On the next visit following my cataclysm of mania, the hooded guards could not subdue me. Even in their numbers, my raw bedlam could not be contained. I took them under my wrath and ruined them, delighting in the slow pleasure of biting off their tongues using their own mouths. In my glee, they rejoiced at being sent back to the hells from where they came.

Once every one of the hooded mercenaries were dead, I did not wait to leave the confinement of my loathing. I ran wildly up the stairs that led up and out of the lair tucked into the base of a mountain. And when I reached the open

air, I plunged towards the distance, feverishly running to anoint those who would follow me and sacrifice those who would not.

The sequence of my changes was no coincidence. The hooded creatures were but pawns leading me through the necessary steps of my completion; they were my servants, paid nothing but their own forfeit. This was about my change, not my imprisonment. And I learned of my name once more, amidst the memories of ancient evils: Unsonselvitzsol.