

Eternal Grief

by

Marcelo Hipolito &

Marcelo Machado

Eternal Grief

by

Marcelo Hipolito &

Marcelo Machado

©2005

All rights reserved.

Marcelo Hipolito &

Marcelo Machado

Rua Conde de Bonfim, 214/403

Rio de Janeiro, RJ

Brazil

CEP 20520-054

E-mail: mhipolito@post.com

Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Story</u>
1	Eternal Grief
14	Weird World: Bats of a Fur
24	The Circle of Life
52	The Choices We Make
95	The Unborn
125	R.I.P.
130	Home
139	Weird World: Jack in a Box

Eternal Grief

Lost in the woods, Roger and Walter were two vagabonds, searching for shelter from the relentless cold wind that was tormenting them.

As they reached a clearing, they were surprised to find a decrepit castle before them, almost indiscernible under the faint moonlight.

With a couple of stones, they broke down one of the windows. As they went inside, they found themselves in a wide, dusty living room with cobwebs all around.

“I don’t think this is such a good idea,” Walter said. “This place gives me the creeps.”

Roger lighted a candelabrum with a match. “Come on! Stop winning, will you... It’s better than freezing our butts out in the cold.”

Walter was uneasy. “Looks like no one’s been here in a long time. Dammit! I don’t think we’ll find anything to eat in this rat hole.”

“Always thinking with your stomach, lad,” Roger said, searching around with the candelabrum. “Maybe we won’t find no food, but I’ll bet there should be something of value around here.”

“No way. A place like this was probably looted years ago.”

“Only one way to find out,” with greed in his eyes, Roger left the empty room. Walter was close behind him.

They came to an impressive, gigantic hall with a large stairway leading to a mezzanine guarded by a collection of hideous gargoyles.

“Let’s spread out,” Roger said.

“What?!” Walter exclaimed, mortified. “Why?”

“So we can finish it sooner, you idiot.”

Walter hesitated. “I think we best stick together.”

Roger smiled, teasing his buddy. “Don’t tell me the little girl is afraid of ghosts?”

“Don’t you mock me, man!”

Roger became truly menacing. “Listen, you moron. The only thing here that’s gonna hurt you will be my boot kicking your sorry behind if you don’t do as I say. Got it?”

Walter waved against his will. “All right, all right...”

“Now see what you can find upstairs,” Roger gave his candelabrum to Walter after he lighted another one for himself. “I’ll take a look down here.” Roger headed for a gothic doorway at the end of the hall.

Walter was scared as hell as he took the stairway. And the fact that it looked even spookier under the candelabrum light wasn’t helping him at all.

* * *

Roger came to a long corridor with several doors alongside it. He entered the

first one and found himself in an enormous kitchen with two huge ovens.

In the meantime, Walter cautiously reached the mezzanine. The many gargoyles and bizarre paintings of fierce-looking old men were giving him the feeling of being watched. All of a sudden, he freaked out as something touched his leg. "JESUS!" But it was just a fat mouse passing by. "Damn rats!"

At that very moment, a faint blue light appeared in front of him.

"Roger..." Walter's horrified voice sounded low as a whistle. The strange light shined upon him. He cried out like a madman. "ROGER!"

* * *

Roger was searching a china-closet when he heard Walter. "What now?" Roger asked himself impatiently as he moved back to the hall.

"Walter!" he called him out loud for a few times, but there was no response. Roger started feeling uneasy. He knew his partner was a superstitious man, but to scream like that and suddenly go silent... Roger reached the great hall. "Dear God..."

The cigarette fell out of his mouth as he gazed at Walter, who was being held a few meters above the mezzanine by six tentacles of blue white light, emanating from the dark spectrum of an old man dressed in a shredded cloak.

The tentacles were choking Walter. "Help... me..." They threw him over the

stairs. His neck was broken the second he hit the floor.

The spectrum hovered in the air, looking as if the devil himself was carrying him. It flew toward Roger who was helpless frozen with fear. But, suddenly, the ghost stopped just a few inches away from him, afraid of a mysterious shape that appeared behind Roger.

Roger turned around and found a female dark figure that spoke to him with an ancient Celtic accent. As the words came out of her mouth, strange images formed inside Roger's mind, allowing him to actually see the unfolding story.

* * *

It was the year 1884.

Castle McMurtrey was covered with a white mantle of snow that was falling over the highlands of Scotland.

The bedroom looked morbidly dark. The baron and the baroness were holding each other in front of a luxurious cradle. Tears were running down on both their faces.

All of a sudden, the sadness of the room was broken when a window opened by itself, allowing a butterfly-sized ball of light to come flying through it.

The noble couple was astonished. "What is that?" the baroness asked, startled.

"I don't know," her husband replied.

The little ball of light hovered between them and the cradle. "My name is Arana," the tiny being announced with a voice both magical and sweet.

“It speaks!” the baron was surprised.
“Are you flesh or spirit?”

“I am none... and both,” Arana answered, flying over the cradle, casting her light upon the lovely baby inside it.

“Husband... can’t you see? She is a fairy!” the baroness realized.

The parents held hands with renewed optimism. “Can you help us?” the baroness asked, anxious. “The doctors gave us no hope... they tell us our son will not live to see another week.”

“It is why I’m here,” Arana said calmly. “I can save him... for a price.”

The baron stepped forward. “Name your price. Whatever you want shall be yours.”

“I wish nothing for myself.”

“Then what?” the puzzled baron asked.

“I am offering the life of your son for the lives of others,” Arana answered.

The baroness approached her. “What others?”

“The defenseless”, Arana replied. “In your pain for your sick child, you have forgotten the world around you. I cannot help all the needed that exist out there. But you can, Baron... At least some of them.”

As Arana’s light suddenly became brighter, she started growing until she reached human size. She was the most beautiful woman they have ever seen, a fresh-looking redhead with delicate pointy ears and colorful butterfly wings. She was

wearing a sexy Celtic dress, with leather gloves and boots.

She stared at the sick baby for a second, then back at his desperate parents. “Do we have a deal?”

The baron and the baroness exchanged a glance. “Yes,” he acceded. “You have my word.”

Arana smiled. She gently touched the baby in the chest. The baroness’ eyes showed a profound love for her child. “The doctors told us he was born with a weak heart.”

“Not anymore,” Arana cut her index finger with her thumbnail, allowing her dark blood to flow into the baby’s mouth. He drank the blood with hunger.

* * *

Saved by the powers of the fairy’s blood, the baby grew to become Trevor McMurtrey, a healthy boy with a fierce look in his eyes. During that time, the baron kept his word, using his money and influence to help the needed throughout the Kingdom.

However, as Trevor reached the age of twelve...

* * *

The baroness was sitting in the front yard, having tea, when Trevor appeared riding a strong, fast horse. As he stopped in front of her, the baroness noticed a bloodstain on his shirt and a streak of blood coming out of his nose.

“What happened, dear?” she tried to reach him, but he backed off with the horse. “Nothing, mother. I am all right,” the pompous boy replied.

“Nonsense, we shall put a compress on it right away...”

“I said it is nothing!” the boy urged in an almost raging tone. The poor woman stepped back.

“Where is she?” the arrogant boy asked.

The baroness strove to conceal the sadness in her voice. “In the tower...”

“SHE is the only one I need,” Trevor rode toward the castle, leaving his desolate mother behind.

The baron had ordered the servants to keep away from the tallest tower of the castle, for in there was secretly located Arana’s chambers. It was a small rounded place with only a modest bed and chest. Arana was lying on the bed, playing with a few butterflies that got scared away as Trevor stormily entered. “You must teach them a lesson!”

“Teach whom?” Arana’s voice was calm as usual.

“Angus and Duncan!”

“The sons of Count McCormick...” she sighed. “What was it this time?”

“I want you to hang them on a tree, upside-down!”

“Master Trevor...”

“Then you shall rip their skins off! And then--”

Arana got tired of that nonsense. “Enough, Master Trevor! Please!” Trevor shut up. “You know quite well I cannot and will not do such a thing. Have I not taught you that violence is not the way?”

The boy's fierce façade shattered. "But they've hurt me!" he said, rubbing the tears from his eyes.

"Come here," the moved fairy said. He came to her. She waved her hand over his nose, making the wound disappear.

"Those thugs cowardly beat me and you will allow them to go free... Is that it?" Trevor was staring at her. "What kind of fairy godmother are you?"

She couldn't help but to smile off his remark. Her tone was an accommodating one. "I am here to PROTECT you, little one, not to inflict pain on others, specially if they are children."

"If father was here, he would force you to take some action."

"Your father would never ask me such thing. He is a man of good," Arana caressed his face. "He is now in Edinburg raising money for the poor. You should follow his example."

Trevor was far from being convinced. "If you are not going to punish them, at least give me the means to defend myself."

"No!" she maintained.

Trevor put on his best expression of pity. "But they are older and bigger than I am. They hit me every time they see me. Sooner or later they will end up hurting me real bad."

Arana sighed.

"Just help me protect myself. That's all I'm asking... Please!" the boy insisted.

Arana bought his act out of love for her beloved godson. "All right! But if you ever hurt those boys I shall..."

"Never."

"You must promise, Master Trevor."

"You have my word."

Arana was reluctant, but she was also bounded by her oath to the baron to protect his son against all harm. "Very well."

Trevor was exhilarated. "You may go," Arana proclaimed. He was confused. "I'm still waiting for the incantation."

"It's already done," Arana said. "Next time you meet the count's sons, you shall have the strength of a grown man. But remember that you must use it wisely."

"I will," he said. "Thank you, godmother. You shall not regret it," the boy raced out of the chambers.

"I already do," Arana whispered to herself, feeling quite uneasy. Deep in her heart, she felt that she had just made a terrible mistake.

* * *

It took Arana no more than a day to discover how severe her mistake truly was.

In the old barn near the river, a horrified young deputy couldn't bare to look at the two small corpses. As the constable arrived and saw the bloodied tarps covering the bodies, he knew it wouldn't be a pretty sight, but as he uncovered them even he was shocked. In all his years on the job, the old constable had never seen anything like that.

The count's sons, Angus and Duncan, fifteen and fourteen years of age,

respectively, had been beaten to death. Several bones in their bodies broken. Their faces were barely recognizable due to the viciousness of their assailant. “What kind of monster would do such a thing?” the constable asked himself. He turned to his deputy. “Are there any witnesses?”

“None so far, sir,” the deputy hesitated for a second before continuing. “They were last seen discussing with the baron’s son. You don’t think...”

“Absurd! Look at these wounds,” the experienced officer pointed out. “A child doesn’t have the strength to do that kind of damage. This was a grown man’s doing, that’s for certain.”

“Yes,” the deputy agreed. “A raving mad one, at that.”

Hidden amidst the shades in the ceiling, in her butterfly-like size, Arana was watching it all. Tears of sadness were running down her face.

* * *

The night fell over castle McMurtrey.

Frightened as if the demons of the pit themselves were after her son, the baroness held Trevor tight in her arms. Both of them were terrified by the furious sounds of destruction coming from the living room.

At that moment, the baron arrived from Edinburg. The baroness ran to him with Trevor, telling him all that had happened.

Both mortified and shocked, the baron headed for the living room. The terrible noises ceased as he stepped in.

The baron found all the furniture wrecked; paintings and curtains destroyed. Back to her human size, Arana was hovering a few meters above the floor. She stood still, with a silent rage in her eyes not even she thought existed.

There was a clear, undeniable fear in the baron's voice as he spoke to her. "I've just heard... It is a tragedy..."

"A tragedy?" Arana got angrier. "A TRAGEDY?!"

The baron stepped back. He had never seen her like that. Arana was always a kind, gentle spirit. For the first time, he was truly afraid of her.

Arana's expression became scarier. "I should kill him! Do you understand that?"

"Yes..."

Arana took a deep breath. "But that would not bring back the lives he took."

The baron sighed. "Thank you--"

"Do not thank me yet!" she strove hard to keep her anger under control. "Such hideous crime shall not remain unpunished."

She looked deep inside his eyes. "From this day on, your son will never be able to leave these walls. He will be imprisoned in this castle to the end of his days." The baron was appalled.

Arana turned back to her fairy size and flew away through a window. She was never seen again.

* * *

From that day on, a desperate Trevor would struggle to escape the confinements of the castle. He would try all of its exits; to

breakout while holding hands with a parent or servant; even riding a horse through the front doors. Every attempt ending in the same unfortunate result: He would stumble into the invisible barrier that imprisoned him inside those walls.

Seven years later, Trevor became the baron himself after the death of his parents on a train crash. After that, he progressively turned into a secluded man, avoiding all human contact, including his servants.

Boosted by the fairy blood that ran through his veins, Trevor died an old man of one hundred thirty-three years of age. A bitter, resentful old man, with a heart turned into stone and a soul consumed by hate. A hate so powerful that, instead of passing away, he turned into a spectrum of pure evil destined to haunt a cursed castle throughout eternity.

* * *

As the story ended, Roger found himself again in the present, before the dark female figure, he then recognized as Arana.

“Run... while you still can,” Arana spoke to Roger. “I can’t hold him back much longer.” Roger was still paralyzed with fear. She yelled at him. “GO!” The cry awoke him from his shock. He ran away like a bat out of hell.

The spectrum of the old Trevor stared at Arana for a moment and then vanished into thin air.

Arana lifted her arms, and soon dozens of birds of a number of species and colors came flying from the woods. The birds

carried Walter's corpse back with them so it would never be found.

Walter had become another victim of Arana's past mistake. A mistake for which she had been punishing herself ever since. She had become both jailer and prisoner, condemned to haunt and be haunted by her godson's maddened soul, doomed to go through existence drowned in eternal grief.

Weird World: Bats of a Fur

This job sucks!

Sure I've always known that but, sometimes, I think I'll quit. But, I never do. The truth is there's nothing else I can do, so here I stay, late at night, busting my ass in a decrepit old bar, with a glass in my hand, watching a dame who may or may not be cheating on her husband.

Here between us, for her own sake I hope she isn't, 'cause if she is, boy, what he'll do to her won't be nice... at all! Don't get me wrong, it's not like I care or anything, I just don't get it. How some people can be so stupid? I mean, she's married to that MUMMY, for crying out loud. She knows what he does for a living... Ha, ha, ha, 'for a living', that was a good one. Anyways, she should've known better...

Then again I guess we never do, do we? If so I'd have done something better for myself instead of ending up like a PRIVATE DICK. But you have figured that out already by my hat and trench coat, right?

Maybe I should've listened to my folks when they said: "Son, you won't go far without any education." But to tell the truth, I don't think that would've changed anything. You see, I believe we do the things we do 'cause that's what we are meant to do. It's our nature.

Take the world, for instance... How long ago was it? A couple of centuries ago, I guess... The "End of the World" finally

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

