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My Life  
Among the Electric  
Tower Giants

Brain Scientist

Throughout my life I have suffered recurring nightmares, visions of electric tower robots come to life beneath cloud-thick skies, and everything was all grayscale black and white. Like an old sci-fi movie come to life all in lucid-crisp real world 3D, more focused than reality.

There are beams of sunlight, purest white, perfect bands; hot white light between cloud breaks, shining down upon the shoulders of the tower giants. Their metal joints gleaming. Beautiful carnage, like the ash rain of some volcanic eruption, searing stinging radiant.

They walk with awkward precision, crushing cars and homes beneath their steel feet, whipping at men and livestock with their hot electric cable arms. Smashing church steeples with enormous electric whips. I run amidst the debris. And my town is all wreckage and ruin.

It seems a malfunction. To others, fleeing amidst the devastation, perhaps cold malevolence. But something stays my fears, and in my dreams I stop at the foot of one metal titan, men fleeing all around me, broken planks and planes flying past in the growing winds, lighting exploding down from the clouds, and trees everywhere burned with the bright gray white light fire of a monochrome world. And the giant stops.

It stands before me, automatic and unfeeling, and I placed my hands upon its metal appendages, climb up to its shoulders.

During the advent of film, all carnage, the most pressing and dreadful bits of reality came in black and white. In newsreels at the picture show, or later, on my television set.

Around me, the Technicolor world, the world of bright red doorways, autumn leaves, and the green frogs of summertime pools, everything seemed benign almost harmless, but the world of black and white was a dangerous and foreign reality.

Once a scientist, the monotone realm of microscopic organisms spelled a new danger. Without the aid of a microscope, these infectious biomes were as invisible as an electric current.

The Nazi generals had plans of global domination. Within their hearts and minds burned a fire they had convinced themselves could only be satiated by the possession of vast tracts of terra firma, broad political boundaries, and the enslavement of men's minds.

But some of their scientists thought differently; their objectives ended not with the Reich's ownership of men and lands, but control over the very dominion of god himself.

They sought to breach the borderland of the immortals, to take custody of their methodologies. To dissolve the boundary between god and man and in doing so become like gods themselves.

It is the hidden motive of every scientist. But to confess this would be impossible; all scientists are atheists.

As a child I fell from the back of a flatbed pickup truck. Back then, this town was primarily farmland, with a small town green lined with a few commercial buildings beside the town hall at the crossroads of Main Street and Clear Spring Road.

On this particular evening there was a fair, to honor the completion of the region's new electrical grid. The grand finale was to be a stunt performed by the Great Spazzarini, a famous daredevil whose stunts had gained him prestige and acclaim the world over. Prior to the night in question he had somersaulted the entire length of the Great Wall, bob sledded down the Eiffel Tower, and gone over Victoria Falls in a Conestoga wagon drawn by three white mules.

At the time, my admiration for this man was third only to that which I felt for Thomas Edison and Nicolai Tesla. And so, when I survived a fall from a moving truck en route to witness one of his daring feats, I felt as if I myself had accomplished a stunt of my own.

I had broken my collarbone. It was clear to me in that after the fall I'd lost the ability of radial rotation in my shoulder joint. I could see the fracture through my skin, but would not allow the loss of use of my right arm, nor the excruciating pain to stop me from seeing this historic act to be performed by one of my greatest idols.

Two men stood beside the Great Spazzarini. One on each side. Atop the electrical tower at the hill tops beyond the "Rest and Relaxation Ranch." The men were young, no older than fourteen or fifteens years of age. Even from the spectators' corral, in the field at the foot of the hills we could see they were immigrants. The large floppy hats, the sweater vests and pillowy knickers and cartoonish boots they wore told us that much.

A large electric search light had been trucked in from New York City, and when the chief of police flipped the large toggle switch to ignite the lamp, it cracked them boomed. The light was pointed to where the Great Spazzarini and his assistants stood. One of the boys spoke, announcing the commencement of the death-defying feat, through a megaphone cylinder at least three feet around. His voice was high pitched, peppered with rolling R's, lush consonants, and fat ripe vowel sounds, and our suspicions of their foreign origins were confirmed.

"Allow me, dear spectators, sweet women and men of these idyllic and placid lands, to offer you this privilege: to witness a feat so amazing that the tale of its occurrence will be passed on through the future generations of your bloodline."

The great Spazzarini wore a handlebar moustache three times the width of his face. It was thick and black, and the hair atop his head was slick and parted, combed down tight upon his scalp. He wore a baby blue leotard that covered his chest and arms, pair of bright red briefs, and his legs were covered by bright white tights that ran down into shin length crimson boots.

I could never have guessed the tragedy that would soon occur.