

## DANCING IN THE CORNER

BY KJ SANCHEZ

***IN WHICH A FORMER PROFESSIONAL WRESTLER TRIES HIS BEST TO DESCRIBE HOW HE UNDERSTANDS TIME IN ONE OF THE MOST GORGEOUS LIBRARIES ON EARTH***

### WNPL December

**Prompt:** Gabriel Macedo: I'm having a hard time collecting my thoughts after the accident.

*A Man walks through the Peabody library. As he walks, he touches books, perhaps pulls them out and glances through.*

### MAN

I'm having a hard time collecting my thoughts after the accident.

This accident, I mean. I think this one was different because of how I took the blow. I dunno, but this one feels different.

It's time.

Me and time have parted ways.

I have zero relationship to time.

What do you mean what do I mean?

I have no concept of the passage of time.

None.

That's why I always have my phone in my pocket. I have everything on an alarm. If I have to go to the gym in half an hour I'll put it in my phone on alarm, then I'll know when half an hour has gone by. Half an hour, two hours, two days from now, it's all the same. I mean, I'm not an idiot, I have ways of knowing how long things take – I'm great at reading cues, I know what's morning, afternoon and night. Like I said, I'm not an idiot. I can get myself to the airport on time and I never miss an appointment. But I have little tricks for all that.

You and me, when I saw you. And I'm happy to see you, by the way. When I saw you, you could have told me the last time we saw each other was last month, last year or two years ago and I have no way of knowing which. I can't say, "oh, that happened two months ago." No idea. I'm great at context. You tell me, "Hey, what happened at such

and such a match when so and so got all up in so and so's face" and I can tell you every detail there was. I'll remember everything about a moment, I just don't know where in time that moment falls. You understand?

Let's see... injuries. Besides a scrambled brain.. well, there's my neck. Of course. I can only turn to the left this much (*He shows*) and even less the other way. Herniated disks all the way up and down my neck. Very little hearing in this ear. Lost plenty of teeth. This arm can't straighten, (*Tries to straighten arm*) You see that? Knees are shot, of course. No more cartilage. Just bone on bone at this point. But the big one is my back. It'll take me at least till noon before my back stops screaming.

Absolutely. Of course I'd do it again. Are you kidding? I got paid – and got paid *well* to play. All day long, I played. Sure, it was painful, sure I was damaged beyond repair, but if you go out of this life without a few dings, what's the point at all?

I mean, I got to travel the world! I got to go on safari, I got to see elephants in the wild. I got to travel to the Artic. I stood right on the southern tip of Africa and looked out over where the Indian Ocean meets the Atlantic. And it's just like you see on a map – two different colors, side by side, just like on a globe, a line right down the middle and two totally different bodies of water are meeting and there's these two different colors. It's just amazing. And I got to see that.

I got to go places and do things and meet people and have experience that only a few people get a chance to have – and all that because I was good at dressing up in tights and landing on my head. And picking people up and dropping them on their heads. Of course, dropping people on their heads is definitely the best part of that equation. But I got to go places and do things. And I wouldn't change that for the world.

And I still get those chances, because I was a professional wrestler. I get to still do that. Sure, they're not asking me to the center of the dance floor anymore, but heck, I'll dance anyway. As long as someone will give me a tiny corner somewhere, I'll keep on dancing cuz I love it. My body doesn't love it. You see the robo-gear I have to wear round my knees now. But even now and then, I'll keep on doing it till they have to drag me away.

Here's what you need to understand: There is an emotional pain that is so great, so deep, so dark. The idea of not doing what you love hurts so badly – emotionally - that I will endure any amount of physical pain there is... just to avoid that emotional pain, that heart-breaking loneliness of not being able to do what I love. I dunno.