

Endri's Vision

By C. Jade Wyton

Endri, son of liches, is a powerful mystic. And when a reoccurring nightmare wakes him once again, he decides to chase the vision through time and finds himself set opposite his distant descendant, ready to talk about the horrors unfolding in the future.

Contains unreality, mild horror themes, and some violence.

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Endri awoke with a start, his sweat-soaked sheets sticking to his damp fur as he sat upright and tried to catch his breath.

It was that dream, again.

The one where Maztika fell apart; the gods falling one by one, torn from their realms into the mortal plane and cut open like corpses ready for embalming as their powers were stripped from them and absorbed into the a swirling whirlpool of blood and gore encased in a white coat. Slowly taking the form of something horrifying, as it pulled skeletons from the ground and set them upon the living. The undead pulled from the ground cracked it, and the entire continent began to shatter and float away. Into the ocean, into the sky— The world turning upside down as the Earth split and ate all unlucky enough to not find purchase on the rubble.

Endri ran a hand over his face, pulling his tense skin downwards as he wiped away the wet along his cheek and snout.

Then, from the cracks in the ground sprouted plantlike growths. Some sort of fungus, bridging the gaps and coating all it came in contact with. The people who had not yet succumbed to the gore's attack were encased in terrifying pods, too strange and otherworldly for Endri to possibly understand.

A man who looked far too much like himself —paler, perhaps, with a simpler coat pattern and only one antler— stood in the centre of the fungus.

He couldn't tell if the satyr was fighting the gore with his creations, or aiding it. But either way, the continent was only ripped further apart in the ensuing confusion.

And Endri fell through the cracks, spinning out of control as he tumbled into darkness. The satyr man reached for him, seemingly desperate to stop his fall but missing his hand by a hair's length.

The darkness then grew darker, and darker— Impossibly so. It pressed down on him in a suffocating pressure.

And then he'd woken up.

It was a horrid dream, and he hated that it was so reoccurring. From once a year in his childhood, slowly becoming more frequent until now it was almost every night. He saw it over and over again, no matter how much he tried to control or suppress his powers.

A long quiet hung in his room, as his breathing evened out. And after a

moment he rose to his feet and removed his sleeping gown, instead replacing it with his daytime robes. He hung atop his horns his lucky bell, to keep away bad spirits and creatures from forcing their way into his mind, and took a deep breath.

‘What does it *mean*?’ he breathed as he did up the last of his buttons. He tapped a hoof, frustrated, before hurrying to his closet and retrieving a small box.

The nuns had warned him against channelling his mystic powers without the guidance of the priests. But he couldn’t wait for them to awaken; he had to chase the tail-end of his dream, while it still spun in the air like the smoke of the incense he began to light. There was no time to waste, not if he wanted to follow it. He had to act, now.

‘Show me,’ he muttered, setting down the last of his candles and closing his eyes. ‘I welcome you to show me more. When will this happen? Who is that man? What is that creature of gore and hate? Show me more, so I may stop this horror from occurring. I beg of you.’

The scent of his candles and incense mingled together, entwining with the last of the vision before it escaped his room and pulling it into his senses as he took a deep breath.

The suns rose and set in his mind. Over, and over again. Growing faster and faster with every revolution around the planet.

He soon lost count of how many times the sunrise came and went. It must have been at least a hundred— No, a thousand— No, a *million* days passed, before the spinning of the world began to slow like a wheel coming to a stop.

He was now by a large willow tree, in a realm far away. The world here was untouched by the chaos of his previous vision.

He relaxed; letting his dream carry him forward.

A unicorn, small and brown, with shining pink hair and only half a horn, trot around the tree. Circling it over and over and over like a mechanical carousel. And watching this creature, mounted in the branches of the tree, were near a hundred vultures. Horrid and scraggly brown things, their eyes were unnaturally yellow and red, and they seemed to almost grin as their gazes followed the unicorn’s journey around the tree. But she walked with her head held high; proud, despite her circumstance. She met Endri’s eye, and then rose from four legs to two, taking on a shape uncomfortably similar to his own.

They stared at each other a long time, before she silently moved back to her circling.

He realised, now, that she was looking up to the vultures with a furious look in her eye. As if trying to find a way up to their sides.

And then he saw why.

A gnomish woman, small and clearly beaten, hung above the tree, suspended by a metal collar and chain that reached up into the distant sky, its end connected to a small floating orb. She was desperately trying to hold herself up, gripping the chain and pulling herself higher to relieve the pressure from her throat to breathe... but she could only do so for a moment, before the vultures pecked her fingers and she fell, choking, to the end of the chain. She would then heft herself up again to take a breath, and the torture would repeat.

The now-satyr continued to pace angrily at the base of the tree, and Endri was

filled with a grief he could barely comprehend.

He recalled a picture he had been given, long ago; one he had dismissed as unimportant. It had been of this same gnomish woman. His mother, the nuns had said. Who had been murdered before his birth, and he had barely been saved from her womb.

He had never cared to have his mother —the church had been his family, not her— but to see her suffering so much filled him with sorrow.

Surely, there was something he could do to help her? To bring her peace?

There was a BANG, then. Like the backfiring of a spell, and the vultures scattered; seemingly more irritated than afraid, as a little green man joined the unicorn at the base of the tree. He slipped some sort of wand —metallic and L-shaped, something Endri had never witnessed before— back into his pocket before jumping into the tree and climbing it. He leapt for the hanging woman, as did the unicorn from the ground, and they both took ahold of her; breaking the chain that held her and pulling her into the branches of the trees where they, together, disappeared.

When they did not reemerge Endri edged closer. There was a whispering voice, calling his name. A woman speaking from the trees. Beckoning him to climb into its branches.

He was not sure if he should; though he swallowed his fear and did as he was told. He had called forth the dream, after all. To reject it now would be ludicrous.

So he climbed into the tree, and immediately found himself in a forest of branches. Impossibly wide and tall, he climbed with no end to it in sight.

Then, the sound of babies crying met his ear, and he climbed faster, hurrying towards the noise.

There was a gnarled, open knot in the trunk of the tree, and scrabbling at the entrance was one of those horrid birds.

It pulled its head out as he reached it, a screaming satyr newborn clasped in its beak, and Endri gasped and tried to stop the animal from taking the child. He was too slow, however, and with a flick of its huge and powerful wing into his face, the animal took off with the child and vanished through the thick branches.

‘No, no, no—’ Endri almost slipped out of the tree as he watched the vulture and swore in the Maztikan tongue. That poor thing!

He found his balance and gave a miserable sigh, wishing he understood what this vision was trying to tell him....

The crying of a second baby distracted him, and he moved to the knot.

He settled on the branch below it and peered inside, his heart jumping at what he saw.

Another baby. This one a satyr like the last. Though neither was anything like himself. This satyr was a different kind; more humanoid. More... *normal*.

The child, now suddenly held in his arms, reminded him of how strange a satyr he was, with his deer-like face and furry body.

The baby babbled and reached up to Endri. He placed his little hand on Endri’s eye-shaped marking, directly in his forehead, and immediately Endri felt a tug on his powers.

He saw flashes of potential futures; of anger and death and hurt and destruction.

A young boy killing his possessed mother.  
A community ravaged by starvation and fear.  
Serpentine bodies entwining and choking out the life from each other.  
Twins drowning in their own blood before they were even born.  
A *war*, between people of the stars and people of the dirt.  
And anger, furious and unstoppable, as the satyr he had seen rip apart  
Maztika held the limp body of a beautiful tabaxi woman in his arms.  
And all of it ended before it began, with soft words and compassion quelling  
agony that longed to be shared and spread like plague.  
A voice whispered in his ear, that woman's voice, speaking from the leaves,  
themselves:  
'Wordspinner, wordspinner, speak of peace. Speak of peace, mighty  
wordspinner, and so it shall be true. Oh, share your heart with us, wordspinner,  
so our own may never break again.'  
And suddenly, the child was an adult, sitting across from Endri.  
'Um... hi.'

—END—

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