

CHIMERA MAN

BY JOE ALEGADO

Excerpts

He moved forward even though the rest of him had not caught up. With every step he took, parts of him wandered around him like zombies with no clear destination. The faint beating of his heart – like a metal detector hovering over the ground – sent out a beacon to those pieces of him straggling behind, guiding them back into him, into the memory of who he once was. In this stumbling, cubistic version of himself, he shuffled his way forward. The night had removed the connective tissue which had held him together, and now, it had left him with a dangling mass of body parts and pieces of his mind, held together with the remaining light of his survival instinct.

The idea that his feet were actually carrying him forward was laughable – it was more like a marionettist maintaining control over the man who once was. What had

been flimsy threads of a false reality holding the man together was now the survival instinct of a man waking up to his own light – the light which was now straining to illuminate the hole inside; the one he had fallen into, long, long ago...last night.



The rope was now loose and flailing around in the wind. The only thing anchoring X to the ground was the rope around his waist and the part still wrapped around the palm tree. He saw it was still holding up but realized it was just a matter of time before it, too, would come loose. In that instant, he knew there was no time to waste. He HAD to nail the door to the window before the rope came off the palm tree.

X struggled to make it to his feet. Still bent over at the waist, he lowered his center of gravity as far as he could possibly go. His thighs shook under the strain of the crouched position he was in. Holding on to the door with both hands, he took a deep breath and blew the air out as he yelled and yanked the door off the muddy ground and pulled it up to his chest. At that very moment, he felt the rope release its grip on the palm tree. Now he was at the mercy of Hurricane Tallulah. There was nothing tethering him to the ground. She had the power to carry him away and toss him wherever she wanted. Right when he felt one of her violent wind currents convulse beneath him in preparation to hurl him to another neighborhood, he shot a glance towards the palm tree. In the time it took him to shake the rain from his eyes to see what was happening, Tallulah jerked him out of the muddy puddle of water and tossed him up five feet into the air. In that one instant, he felt the rope tense up. He shot a look towards the palm

tree and there, holding the rope in their hands, was Hanna and Alexandra in full battle mode. With eyes ablaze and adrenalin avalanching through their bodies – they became his anchor.

X splashed back down to earth, still holding on to the door.



In the stillness of the almost darkened stage, the light technician took the house to black. The audience's murmurs slowly disappeared, leaving conversations hanging in the air – the same air of anticipation shared by the performers on *the other side*. As the curtain opened, a ribbon of coolness drifted in from the auditorium and onto the stage, passing through them, signaling the beginning of their entrance into another world. On the other side, the audience members sat inside their own private and personal worlds, where they peered into the darkness revealed to them by the now opened curtain.

What was earlier in the day, an empty and typical theater with an empty and typical stage, was now a *place of magic*. Life was about to be magnified and channeled through the prism of a mother and daughter as they were about to project the colors of their inner world out into space.

From the ensuing silence, a faint stream of violins emerged as they rippled through the dark in a gentle undulation of vibrations moving outwards from the stage towards the audience. Surfacing slowly, violas merged into their musical cousins as the buildup ignited the first movement from the two dancers. The string's harmonies coursed through their two bodies as they slowly rose to their feet. Then, from the back of

the stage, somewhere beyond the theater's exterior walls, a volcanic eruption of sound unleashed a wave of cellos as its surging power absorbed all that existed before. As the full tapestry of stringed harmonies spiraled upward, Ariana and Sonja dove headfirst into the musical explosion engulfing the entire stage.

Mother and daughter danced and danced and danced – until they could no more.

In the end, after the music disappeared into its final notes, the curtain closed – leaving traces of life all over the stage.

Read More: <https://joealegado.com>