

## On the Run – Be strong, inner demon!

Marvin Running

### SALES HANDLE

Funny, entertaining and slightly philosophical episodes – written from the inner demon’s perspective.

### DESCRIPTION

Canyons, forests, industrial wastelands:

Ten running experiments which have transformed an inner demon into a psychiatry case.

Marvin should know – after all he is both of them.

It slowly dawned on him that there might be a small problem when he was mid-run through the Grand Canyon. But this was only the beginning of a breath-taking crisis for the inner demon: how could it be that his master was running across Table Mountain just before an important conference? How could he turn his back on civilisation and pant his way through a rainforest with only a compass bearing to follow? Why would he want to start meditating in the middle of a gloomy industrial estate?

As if that weren’t nerve-wracking enough, Marvin would stumble half-naked through the night and abandon his balanced diet – and dabble in Indian visual rituals. Until he came to the conclusion that boundaries only exist so that they can be overcome...

### KEY SELLING POINTS

- Most people are afraid of their own inner demon.
- Here they can read about how it is being defeated.
- Runners can identify all the more with the inner demon’s long ordeal.



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**EXTRACT****Grand Canyon: Blue eyes firmly closed**

I am an inner demon. And it's good that way. Or at least it was, until recently. Now everything has changed. I am lying on the couch. The doctor calls it 'Narrative Therapy'. The best method of combating post-traumatic stress disorder. "Whypost-traumatic," I asked? "It's still ongoing". "Aha," was his response. "Anyway let's start".

I know exactly where I need to start. But first of all, I should probably introduce myself – for better or for worse. That's something I only do rarely and don't like to do – after all, who would welcome me? 'Inner demon' is a truly terrible term anyway. I'd prefer 'director', 'bon vivant' or 'Dr. Feelgood'. Or maybe if need be just 'id', the term coined by Doctor Freud.

My master and the man who has triggered this misery calls me 'Marvin' in reference to the depressive little robot in the romantic series by Douglas Adams.

So: I am Marvin. 'Id', the inner demon. Internal, trapped, constrained and forced into a pair of running shoes. So now that's done with, I can begin.

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"It's fine, Marvin, look!" He clucks like a chicken which has just laid its first egg.

"Why?" I grumble.

"I have to show you something. And don't be like that, you will like it!"

"Unlikely," I whisper.

As usual, he is completely indifferent to my mood. He continues: "Here, the southern edge of the Grand Canyon. This is as far as you can get by car.

If you want to reach the northern side from here, you have to take a huge detour". His index finger traces out a massive detour on the map in front of us. "But here..." His index finger stops on the northern edge and then moves directly and quickly down to the South. "Right across the middle is a tenth of the length – only 30 or at most 40 kilometres".

"Fantastic," I respond. "Amazing nobody thought of it before! So that's sorted, we'll just drive right across the middle. Hopefully we won't get a ticket if we plummet at top speed from the top down into the abyss. In the USA, you're only allowed to do a maximum of 60 miles per hour when falling to your death".

"Marvin," he says reproachfully. "That's not funny." As if I care about that. "And who said anything about driving?"

"I thought..." I stumble over my words as I realise the horror of the situation. "You want to walk round there?" I finally whisper.

Now his eyes start to sparkle. "Not walk, Marvin. We're going to run there. From the South to the North Rim, isn't it great!"

I fall silent, as if thunderstruck.

"We'll have to intensify our training to manage it, Marvin".

It's 24 November. A seemingly normal day. But from today nothing will be the same again. It will be six months before our next family holiday to the Grand Canyon. Six months of preparations which will take him far away from the confines of normality and everyday life. Six months of me trying in vain to talk him out of this ridiculous plan. It would be far too time-consuming to describe all of the horrors of this time. So three examples will have to suffice to demonstrate my despair:

Example 1: Training.

We live in Hamburg and so we run a lot around Alster, often of an evening from the office where we can shower and change. And then we ran our first fifth circuit round the Alster – after doing four first of course. With a rucksack, as we will be carrying one in the Grand Canyon. One circuit of the Alster totals 7.4 kilometres. After the first circuit I begged, after the second I pleaded, after the third I snivelled and during the fourth I cried out for my mother. But he carried on running despite the fact that his speed (and running technique) had dropped to such a low level that he looked as if he was shuffling through a basin of bowling balls.

It's a sunny evening and there are plenty of people around the Alster. We bump into a couple again who were having a BBQ on the river bank earlier. We saw them arrive, set up the BBQ, picnic, drink red wine, watch the sun set – and now they are heading home. "Oh God, how many circuits have you done now then?" they ask him. "Five," he wheezes, thinking he's smiling at them. But in fact he's only twitching a few tiny facial muscles in the arbitrary direction which are not yet frozen with cramp. The result is terrifying. "Ahh..." she says. "Oooh..." he says. How much I envy them their evening trip out to the Alster! And how much I detest ours!

He begins to realise that he has overdone it with this training the hard way at the end of the 5th circuit when we have to stop at a set of traffic lights. The flow of endorphins stops immediately and the dulled pain springs into life. He cannot run any further. He can hardly walk. It's still about 800 metres to the office where the changing rooms and showers await. He only manages 770. We can see the building but his legs cannot get there. The pain is too great. He has to sit down on a step.

Free radicals are partying hard in our upper thighs as if it were Christmas. Putting your fingers in a socket would probably be more relaxing on the muscles. After ten minutes, he pulls himself together again. But once in the shower, the legs give out again and he has to wash himself sitting down. "What if anyone comes in?" I hiss. He wouldn't care, he thinks. He is incapable of standing. But it would be better.

Finally we make it back home. The children have long been in bed and Kirsten passes a rather mocking comment about his appearance. He's thirsty and drinks a bottle of water and wolfs down the remains of the evening's bread left on the table. With the fridge empty and all sweet things off the menu, he is thinking about ordering a family pizza with extra cheese when he is suddenly overcome with tiredness. While dozing off, he notices that his heart is beating faster and louder than usual.

"We reached a milestone today, Marvin," he whispers.

"I never want to reach that milestone again".  
"You don't have to, we will postpone it. We will conquer the territory beyond and kick it into submission."