





The Dark World

“The worst villain the world has ever seen”

by Ewan Botha

It was a cold winter night in the country of Johanistan, where things had been flourishing for decades. But change was looming. A great, century-old evil hiding and gathering strength in the shadows was almost ready to manifest. The queen of the Dark World, Queen Arima, and her loyal servants, Mr Non-stationarity and Professor Invertible, had been working and scheming all day and night to keep the heroes of Johanistan busy and distracted.

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Decades ago, Queen Arima was defeated by the number-one hero. Before the heroes could get their hands on her, her servants put her in a deep slumber and hid her away in a dark cave that no one knew about. The number-one hero, First Difference, disappeared after the queen's defeat and hadn't been seen since, leaving many wondering what had happened to him. Some said he had died in the fight, while others said he had retired from being a superhero. A statue was built in his honour at the very place he had defeated Queen Arima.

Everyone adored the heroes of Johanistan, who kept the people in the country safe and the evil at bay. The main heroes of Johanistan, the guardians of the globe, consisted of four heroes. Three of the four

were Captain ARMA, Arman and Miss Moving Average. Captain ARMA was the second strongest hero and the child of Arman and Miss Moving Average, thus granting him both of their powers. Arman had the power to control the element phi, and Miss Moving Average possessed the power to control the element theta. These elements were most powerful when the energy they expelled stayed within certain limits under certain conditions. If the elements' power exceeded the limit or didn't meet one of the conditions, their powers would become insignificant. That meant they would not be able to perform their heroic duties.

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Everyone in Johanistan knew that there was a big test that one had to pass before one could become a superhero. This test was called the correlogram. It tracked the development of a hero's power over time and how it correlated against their powers at previous points. In this testing period, heroes were tested for white noise and drunkard's walk. White noise was an attribute that increased the power of a hero, as it helped keep the energy they expelled within the necessary limits. The drunkard's walk, however, was a negative attribute that decreased the power of a hero, as it had the same effect on heroes that Mr Non-stationarity's power had.

Mr Non-stationarity had the power to weaken Arman by disrupting the limits within which Arman's power should fall or by making one of the conditions of his power redundant. Professor Invertible had learned to weaken Miss Moving Average's powers in the same manner in which Mr Non-stationarity weakened Arman's powers.

With Queen Arima's two servants gathering enough energy to wake her, a dark and thick mist started covering the whole country of Johanistan. The Dark World had come to pass once again. Queen Arima's power was that of legend. She could make people perceive her as Captain ARMA. She also removed the heroes' energy from their limits and broke the conditions of their power.

The emergence of Queen Arima had the heroes in turmoil. Not knowing what to do, they devised a plan in which there would be a big battle where they would try to defeat Queen Arima once and for all. Queen Arima and her servants also got ready for the impending war.



On the day of the battle, the superheroes felt confident in their abilities and power, but unfortunately, they underestimated Queen Arima and her servants. On that day, evil defeated good in one fell swoop. The guardians of the globe were caught and thrown in prison and left to die there. Johanistan had not seen a day as dark as this. The people were scared and forced to accept the queen's rule.

Queen Arima wanted to remove the statue of the one who had previously defeated her. She went to the statue to destroy it, but a young girl ran to it, crying and wrapped herself around it so no one would destroy it. Seeing this, the queen laughed and ordered Professor Invertible to remove the girl. As Professor Invertible approached her, one of the girl's tears dropped on the statue, resulting in a momentary blackout. As the queen went to destroy the statue, there was a massive crack, followed by silence.

The girl looked up and couldn't believe her eyes. The number-one hero, First Difference, stared down at her, his cape and long hair blowing in the wind. He was not affected by the queen's powers nor that of her servants, and he swiftly defeated them by differencing the queen.

To everyone's surprise, the First Difference converted the queen into a heroine. With the evil banished and an additional hero, Johanistan prospered once again.