

choque. Pero éste, conocedor de las tácticas solapadas, se había ungido con una substancia lubricadora. Se deslizaba, como un cerdo engrasado en una feria tejana, por entre los brazos del Imponente. Al esquivar el brazo, dando un saltico lateral, lanzaba una patada fulmínea que invariablemente se incrustaba en el vientre del Incorregible.

Volvían a los límites anteriores del doyo; se enfrentaban; se abalanzaban y en el punto central del círculo arenoso explotaba una vez más el encuentro de los cuerpos sudorosos. Repetía el Obeso el amago de estrangulación; escapaba el máster de una forma idéntica a la anterior; lanzaba la patada que anclaba en el mismo punto ventral.

Instant replay repetido por una mano perversa hasta llegar a la saciedad.

Economizaba el máster —no había adoptado una postura defensiva ni por cobardía ni timidez ante el Agresivo— sus energías para el momento propicio.

Atrás, en un nicho iluminado por velitas votivas, vio desaparecer el último grano de arena en la cinturilla avispada del reloj.

Era hora.

Aspiró a capacidad. Concentró, en el pie, la energía devastadora que descargó en la panza del Ampulos según se escabullía.

Se volvió el hongkoner, como si regresara al ataque. Se le vio, en los ojos, un brillo súbito que se extinguió de momento. La respiración acezante había degenerado en jadeo tortuoso.

Una contorsión, un castaño incontrolable de dientes.

Los pies, que momentos antes se afianzaran en el sablón, ahora, con cada inhalación, perdían el contacto. Había quedado reducido, mediante el fugu y el lúpulo lenitivo, a un inmenso balón hipnotizado.

El máster, ya dueño de la situación, se desplazó hasta el límite del doyo. Tomó impulso. Abandonó, también, el contacto terrestre.

La violenta patada voladora llegó, de lleno, sobre el trasero del Etéreo. Rodó, como una pelota de fútbol impulsada por un niño travieso, fuera del doyo.

Al salir derribó, de una patada furiosa, un gong ceremonial que se encontraba cerca de la puerta.

Retumbó, en el silencio monástico del gimnasio, la sonoridad metalizada.

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