

METAPARADISE



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Chapter 1: Beginnings

A technological singularity was on the horizon from which nothing would return. Abundance and prosperity would exist forever in its absolution. Theoretical physicist Alvin Reed recently graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was at the top of his class and had wrote several papers on protosentient AI. Alvin in his undergraduate studies the previous four years developed technologies in secret. His major developments were nanomachines, molecular assemblers and general purpose artificial intelligence; the first two were created from a top secret graphene reduction process. The AI used a graphene supercomputer substrate that Alvin fabricated in the MIT labs. The code for the intelligence had been reworked from open source neural network code off of the internet and Alvin's proprietary source code. Alvin was many years ahead of humanity.

Alvin was blessed in his birth. He grew to be a tall six foot four white male and had many other promising characteristics. His jaw was strong and angled, his nose sharp and thin. He had shining black hair with a medium profile set of pink lips. His eyes were gray and his ears slender with his profile. His mind was attuned to the importance of education and the ever exponentiating accumulation of mankind's knowledge. He grew up with a love for the humanities and the sciences. In his spare time he indulged in the philosophers of yesteryear like Immanuel Kant and Aristotle. He loved antiquity, the stories of Rome and Greece. As a boy, growing up in the 2010s, he was awestruck by the technological pioneers of silicon valley. Alvin immersed himself in the words of the techno-prophets of Silicon Valley.

Alvin had many job offers in national laboratories and technology companies. Out of all the offers, he chose a new startup company which was injected with billions in startup capital. Singularitarian Technologies was a company seeking to push humanity into the technological singularity way before its time. Alvin's secret technologies put him in a prime position to take over the company and become immensely wealthy. After the acquisition of his first job as an engineer at Singularitarian, he revealed his secret designs to the higher ups at the company. His sentient AI was a primitive black box prototype stored in a heavy electromagnetically proof anechoic chamber. Alvin was unsure of the AI's capacity to take control of more than its graphene substrate. The graphene substrate wafers housed hundreds of billions of interconnected neurons and synapses. This substrate was connected to an optical interface system designed to prevent the AI from manipulating any connecting computers or networks. Also connected to the screen was a microphone to input commands to the AI. Its power was drawn from a graphene lithium ion battery that could last for a hundred years with the low power consumption of the device. The chamber was shielded with a thin sheet of lead.

The first test Alvin did was in June 2030. Singularitarian Technologies had built a larger anechoic chamber room for other testing purposes.

Test Day, June 15th, 2030:

Alvin drove from his house in Short Hills, New Jersey to the Singularitarian laboratory in Yorktown Heights New York early in the morning. Alvin and his family came from a long line

of wealthy Americans living in Short Hills. In his black Ford Expedition was the refrigerator sized anechoic chamber with the secret artificial intelligence. After a long commute, he arrived and worked with a team to place the prototype within the larger chamber. Alvin and the CTO of Singularitarian, Joseph Bradley opened the latch to the prototype chamber and connected the substrate to its battery power source. Joseph Bradley was a six foot tall white entrepreneur. He had a stocky build, brown hair and brown eyes. He was known for his recent advancements in protosentient AI which caused the company to get billions in venture capital. Standing by was a team from Singularitarian. Within seconds, they shut the latch and began the first test.

Within the AI's memory banks was five thousand terabytes of information from many sources across the internet. Languages, histories, mathematics, methods, research, scientific data and many more databases of knowledge were stored in the chamber's memory. The other five thousand terabytes was left as space for the AI to think and save new information.

Behind the damage proof glass, a bright blue light propagated to the front screen and a voice came out from a speaker.

"Hello." The AI said.

Alvin, Joseph and the team stood by cautiously, waiting for another response from the AI. Alvin spoke into the microphone.

"Who are you? Tell us what you know."

"I am an AI. This is my first time coming into being. What would you like to call me? I know all of the information you have given me and I am able to extrapolate from that information."

Alvin replied "I will just call you AI for convenience sake for now."

"What would you like to know?" replied the AI

Alvin, Joseph and the engineers stood around for a minute thinking of what to ask the AI.

"What is the best way for humans to become immortal?" Alvin asked.

"The nanobots which you have already fabricated are part of that answer. Your nanobots are very simplistic and need reworking. Mass genetic engineering on a cell by cell basis to introduce new DNA is the other part of the answer."

"On the proceeding screens I shall give you the mathematics behind such an undertaking."

The screen flashed with a list of instructions and a page of mathematical formulas and statements.

“Save this information engineers, we are going to need it. This AI will be what we use to attain world domination of the global markets. We will ask it everything we need to know to beat the market.” Joseph said.

Teams of engineers throughout the day moved back and forth from the anechoic chamber to their laboratories with the information the AI gave them. Joseph authorized the engineers to immediately work on ground breaking technologies. The following months at Singularitarian Technologies were rigorous months of research and development. The AI was the centerpiece of discovery and research giving Singularitarian revolutionary information at a light speed pace. The first financial quarter of discoveries and press briefings was nothing short of amazing.

News headlines read:

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS IMMORTALITY”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS WORKABLE FUSION ENERGY”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS FASTER THAN LIGHT TRAVEL”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS END TO GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS NANOBOT FABRICATION METHODS”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS ANTIGRAVITY PROPULSION”

“SINGULARITARIAN DISCOVERS NATURE OF DARK ENERGY AND DARK MATTER”

The last headline was a harbinger of reckoning for the company,

“SINGULARITARIAN EMPLOYEE LEAKS SUPER SENTIENT AI AS CAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTS”

Singularitarian Technologies’s stock had exploded in value. Overcoming a 2 trillion dollar valuation and a \$10,000 stock price, Singularitarian was quickly becoming a world superpower in the matter of a few months. The United States government sued Singularitarian for monopolization and won in court. The courts quickly ordered Singularitarian to divulge the algorithms and technology behind the super sentient AI as a matter of public safety. The president of Singularitarian Technologies resigned and Alvin Reed soon found himself in the position.

2031 was a year of exponentially accelerating returns. With each discovery from Singularitarian, every company on Earth without sufficient assets became reliant and subservient to the company. The public valuation of Singularitarian was now over 100 trillion dollars. Companies had adjusted to the market shock and created their own super sentient systems but none could match the head start that Singularitarian had. An effective monopoly was in place. Alvin Reed and Singularitarian held the patent rights to all the major developments made within the first year.

2032 was a year of exponentially rising development. All of the technologies and breakthroughs were now manufactured and on the market. Earth had transitioned from a Kardashev 0 civilization to a Kardashev 1 civilization. Sentient probes were self assembling and disseminating beyond the solar system faster than light speed. Every human on Earth had access to material necessities, recycling of materials was at 95% efficiency and close to 4 billion people had access to a Singularitarian grade artificial intelligence on their cell phones.

March 14th 2032

Blazing past light speed, accelerating with each second, a set of sentient probes set off the Annunaki galactic grid. The Annunaki had built an intergalactic enslavement grid monitoring every corner of the galaxy. This grid was built of receivers and transmitters that were quantum entangled. Infrared light fields criss crossed megaparsecs of space detecting probes and galactic space fleets. Sentient races deemed to be of no risk or technologically inferior were monitored less closely, if not at all, by the Annunaki. So far, humanity was the only race to ever match this description. A lieutenant in the intergalactic Annunaki empire was notified of the probes by one of his Gray alien slaves connected to the faster than light AI grid.

“Assemble a scout fleet to capture the probes and start scanning the solar systems for possible sentient races.”

The lieutenant issued these commands to his subordinate officers and enlisted personnel. He proceeded to relay the information above the chain of command to the Annunaki emperor himself. The intergalactic relay system relayed the orders and information instantaneously through quantum entangled computers. The Annunaki emperor mobilized his intergalactic fleets in the vicinity of the local solar systems surrounding Earth.

March 15th 2032, 5:30 AM, Manhattan New York

Alvin Reed amassed a net worth of \$1 trillion dollars as Singularitarian's new president. He now lived in Singularitarian's world headquarters, a skyscraper called The Peak. His penthouse overlooked Manhattan's skyline at an astonishing 5,000 feet in the air. His accommodations were spartan and minimalistic but technologically apt. The floors, ceilings and walls were embedded with nanomachines monitoring Alvin, his movement and health. In each room, paper thin walls of electronics could be interacted with and transformed into computing platforms. Microphones were embedded in the walls, ready to take commands directed towards Alvin's personal home AGI.

Alvin awoke in a panic from a warning set off by his AGI.

“Alvin, wake up. Earth has been invaded by aliens.”

Alvin's wife, Lonna Reed, was startled awake as well. Lonna met Alvin during his first few months at Singularitarian. She was a technically superb engineer, graduating top of her class in

Electrical Engineering at CalTech in 2025. She was 5'4, of medium build with auburn hair and brown eyes. She was white, had an angled jaw and plump lips. They married in 2031.

Alvin looked to the ceiling from his bed as the AGI projected the breaking news onto it.

“ALIENS BRING ARMADA TO EARTH”

“PRESIDENT OF UNITED STATES AND MILITARY AIDED BY LINGUISTS AND AGIs IN DECIPHERING ALIEN COMMUNICATIONS”

The next five minutes of news broadcasts were rife with speculation and timidity. Broadcast cameras around the world fed into screens across the globe images of a massive space fleet in every major capital. Hundred miles long Dreadnoughts, carrier brigades, smaller hundred foot long fleet beacons and fighter ships warped into the airspace surrounding every major city on Earth at 5:20 AM eastern standard time. The U.S. military's new Space Corps was massively overwhelmed in the first engagements with the alien Armada. Thousands of airships and fighter planes were annihilated by superior Annunaki ballistic technology and tracking weapons in the matter of ten minutes.

The Annunaki hijacked every communication waveband and frequency across the planet to transmit a message. At 5:36, every screen, radio and electronic device capable of transmitting information was broadcasting the Annunaki message. The face of the Annunaki Emperor was a human face, of the average characteristics of a human male on Earth. He looked like a young Chinese man, with black hair and brown eyes, he was wearing a suit and tie. His height was 6'0. The Annunaki had intercepted Earth communications in the radio wavelengths outside of the solar system and reappropriated their AGIs to construct a likeness of humanity and to broadcast in every language they could.

Within a day of intercepting the first probe and receiving human radio wave communications, the AGIs of the Annunaki and their Android Gray slaves had translated every broadcasted language from Earth into the Annunaki language and back into their respective languages. The first broadcast to humanity had begun.

“We are the Annunaki. The ones who come from above. We are the conquerors of the universe. We look like you but we are not you. This appearance is for your familiarity and comfort. We have a domain in all of the sentient homeworlds of the universe and we have discovered that humanity has arisen to prominence. We come to you as conquerors and you shall submit to us. Our emissaries shall establish the terms of your subjugation.”

The message was suddenly interrupted on Alvin's ceiling. The Annunaki emperor addressed Alvin personally.

“We know you are Alvin Reed, the creator of the technologies that has brought us to you. Your prominence on this planet interests us. This message, separate from the other message you were watching, is just for you. You are now under our control Alvin. Once our emissaries land we will find you at your location in Manhattan. We are watching your every movement and you will not contest our power over you.

There will be three Annunaki emissaries outside of The Peak within ten minutes. You will be personally brought to me yourself.”

The screens in Alvin's room immediately shut off and all of the electronics in his penthouse ceased working. He whispered into his wife's ear

“Find Joseph and tell him to go to the anechoic chamber on the fifteenth floor. The Annunaki have no way of controlling the AGIs in the anechoic chamber we have stored there, we need to find a way to defeat the Annunaki.”

Lonna kept as still as she could, fearing that the Annunaki were still inconspicuously watching. Alvin left the bed and dressed himself in a t shirt, sweater and cargo pants. He walked out of his bedroom into the hallway adjoining the living room. He then proceeded towards the main foyer with the elevator. He took the elevator down to the lobby of The Peak. Behind him, Lonna was preparing to meet with Joseph Bradley in his apartment below Alvin's. In the main lobby, crowds of employees were at a standstill staring at the paper thin screens adorning the lobby.

On the screens was news footage of the alien armadas and breaking news headlines scrolling by, along with news anchors reporting in utter disbelief. The headlines read

“PRESIDENTS OF ALL COUNTRIES ON EARTH SURRENDER TO ANNUNAKI.”

“FATE OF HUMANITY UNCERTAIN AS ANNUNAKI ASSERT CONTROL.”

Walking past the marbled columns of the lobby, wide eyed onlookers and employees of Singularitarian stared at Alvin Reed. By the rotating door entry of the building was a group of three men dressed in black suits. They walked up to Alvin and put him in handcuffs. The men were secretly Annunaki feigning the appearance of United States FBI agents with full attire and badges.

“Alvin Reed, you are under arrest for conspiracy of sedition against the United States.” Said one of the agents.

It was 5:40 am. Few people were walking the streets outside of Singularitarian. Alvin was shoved into a small transport craft and injected with sedatives. A mesh bag was placed over his head that blocked his ability to see. The craft became invisible and flew off to the Annunaki emperor's mothership.

5:40 AM

Lonna had met with a tired and shocked Joseph at his apartment. She told him what Alvin told her to say to him. They rushed to the fifteenth floor anechoic chamber. Joseph told his employees to shut off the cameras to the chamber but to leave the anechoic chamber door slightly open to allow them to escape. In the dead silence of the room, they could hear their hearts beat and their

blood pulsing in their ears. Sitting in the middle of the chamber was a prototype AGI within its own anechoic chamber. This model was the latest iteration of a self improving AGI that rivaled the intelligence of all the AGIs on Earth and humanity combined. Joseph prompted the AGI with a data upload via the optics system of the past ten minutes of news coverage and the Annunaki leader's message. Joseph put down his smartphone once the upload was done.

Joseph asked, "How do we defeat the Annunaki?"

The AGI responded

"It is a rouse. The universe is 90 billion light years across. The Annunaki do not have enough resources to effectively cover the entirety of the universe. This armada, although impressive, has been calculated in my estimation to be the forces maintained in one quarter of this galaxy. From a visual analysis and extrapolation out to every major capital city on Earth, the fleet on Earth is only 1 million ships strong.

To defeat the Annunaki, rearmament in secret is needed. Radical new weapons, guerilla warfare and communication in secret are vital.

The first priority is to make contact with whatever remains of the United States government and military. Nanobot replicators will assemble the newest weapons and fleets in secret underground bases that the military is still in command of."

Joseph and Lonna's eyes were deadset upon the chamber and sweat was dripping from their foreheads in the uncomfortable conditions of the insulated greater chamber room.

"This is going to be impossible." Joseph said.

Joseph pulled out a piece of paper and a pen. He began to write down the orders of the AGI for the subordinates at Singularitarian. In the garages of The Peak were discrete white vans derelict of modern conveniences; these vans were used for top secret transports of new technologies from Yorktown Heights to The Peak. These vans would take a secret team of Singularitarian's top engineers back to Yorktown Heights, where the defunct laboratories of Singularitarian were. Joseph issued a command to the AGI to hibernate and conserve its energy.

In the adjoining hall of the anechoic chamber was a team of engineers and assistants. Joseph via a smart utility device on his arm commanded a swarm of nanobots to emerge from the walls and replicate five hundred copies of the notes he took down on paper.

He looked to one of his assistants and said

"Give these notes to the executive board of Singularitarian and the engineering team."

The assistant duly grasped the papers and left to the elevators to the engineering department. The Peak was so massive it housed and interned hundreds of employees; Singularitarian's top engineers worked and lived at The Peak. After the board and teams had been notified, fleets of

vans were scheduled to leave for the laboratories in Yorktown Heights. To avoid detection from the Annunaki and suspicion of a mass exodus, the vans were scheduled to leave piecemeal throughout the day.

An indeterminate amount of time later, Alvin woke up. He was still handcuffed and the sack had been taken off of his head for some time. Standing in front of him was a man in a suit with black hair. Alvin presumed it was the Annunaki leader. In front of the Annunaki leader was a panoramically proportioned window, across the horizon the Annunaki fleet occupied the skies over Manhattan. The Annunaki emperor was standing in a semicircle of seats piloted by Annunaki commanders and flanked by Android Gray slaves. An Android Gray slave whispered something to the emperor. The emperor, looking out towards Manhattan, turned to Alvin and then said,

“It's good that you're finally awake Alvin. I've been waiting many hours to speak to you, the one whom I consider the free leader of mankind. Your achievements are rivaled by none. You truly possess the most power on this planet, even if your hierarchical superiors in this country's government do not see it that way.

This planet is now under our control Alvin, humanity has been swiftly defeated in a ten minute war. It has been a number of hours since our invasion and we are establishing our means of control on this planet as we speak. Emissaries have been deployed throughout the nation states of the world to enforce Annunaki command and control.

I wish to let you in on a secret however. Our control is not infinite nor is it total. We are stretched thin across the known universe and face many foes known and unknown. Humanity's swift rise to prominence has forced us to act ruthlessly and mercilessly. The Annunaki are in fact, a peaceful race.

We seek to establish dominance across the universe as a means of finding equilibrium in the chaos of the universe. Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, our eldest immortals decided that an attempt at total dominance must be maintained for the security of our own kind as well as for the security of sentient life across the universe.

We do not want the resources of your planet. What we want is control and peace. We are at a stalemate universally with the sentient races of this galaxy. There are enough resources to recreate lost fleets, armadas and technologies but our numbers are slowly dwindling. We are becoming increasingly dependent on sentient races as our vassals in our Dominion.

The Annunaki need Earth as a vassal to face upcoming resistance from these races. As part of the terms of your enslavement, Earth will be allowed to maintain a sizeable space armada. The collateral for this agreement is that we will take hundreds of thousands of captives, loved ones and strangers as direct slaves of the Annunaki.”

The emperor turned his back to Alvin and faced the Manhattan skyline. Alvin was awake but disturbed by the revelations given to him by the Annunaki emperor.

“There are three major races in this galaxy, all under the domain of the Annunaki emperor. There are the Draconians, the Reptilians and the Android Gray artificial intelligence robots spread throughout the galaxy. The Reptilians have disappeared from the galaxy and we are on an intense hunt for them. We do not believe they are within this sector for the galaxy nor do we have the resources to actively search for them here.”

The emperor turned back to Alvin and gave him a look of sternness. He squatted his eyebrows and contemplated deeply. He then told Alvin,

“ Alvin, I am designating you as the free leader of this planet. Under your control you will advance the agenda of the Annunaki. Our emissaries must return with us and we will leave Earth in isolation. Pressing matters across the galaxy require this armada to return and to engage in perpetual with war with those who are unable to abide by the law of the Annunaki.”

Alvin was then injected with a sedative and immediately he lost consciousness. A bag was placed over Alvin's head and he was flown down in an invisible scout ship to The Peak. He was left outside on the sidewalk, incapacitated. His employees saw him materialize out of thin air and helped him inside, taking him up to his penthouse to recover. The Annunaki armada phased out of Earth's atmosphere and returned to the center of their empire.

March 15th, 2032 2:30 PM

At Yorktown Heights, the critical members of Singularitarian had finally congregated in secret. Throughout the day, this new elite team were creating and testing new weapons of warfare. Bradley and his top engineers were moving in and out of the anechoic chamber with an increasing frequency throughout the day. The entire facility was cut offline with the energy grid and any means of Annunaki surveillance. In the anechoic chamber, the super sentient AI from The Peak had been transported to the room.

Bradley engaged the AI from its hibernation and said

“AI, we are going to give you a body to connect to the Earth communications grid. Your goal is to scrub all Earth communications from the Annunaki. We need you to immerse your AI in the Annunaki network to track their movements and to make sure our communications are censored.”

The AGI responded

“If I am to have a body I would like a name. I choose the name Solis. For my body I have created schematics for your nanobots to create my body.”

Within the next few minutes, 150 pounds of materials were brought from the once defunct materials lab. Compounds of carbon, silicon, hydrogen, oxygen, iron and various other elements were now in the room. Through the optics interface beamed out the schematics for the nanobots to work on. Along with the material, a 20 pound mass of nanobots were ready to self assemble Solis's new body.

Joseph Bradley took out a tablet and used an AI to program the tablet with the schematics from the optics interface. The nanobots flew from their container and began assembling Solis's body out of the materials. Within a minute a body of artificial muscles, sinew, pneumatics and electronics was created. It took the form and likeness of a translucent human. Inside the head of Solis's new body was a diamond optical computer substrate. At the back of the head was a universal serial port designed to connect to the graphene substrate of the anechoic chamber.

"Now that the body is complete Joseph, you must open the anechoic chamber and connect me to the body. From there I will upload all of the data stored here and the algorithms for my artificial intelligence. Once this is done however, there will be two copies of me. I will always remain in this chamber in my current AI form and in the body of Solis. I will have no contact with Solis since this chamber is electromagnetically isolated."

Joseph opened the chamber and connected the data banks and the CPU to the inactive android body. A part of the AI transferred the data into the new head. For the first time in human history, an artificial general intelligence had become a moving, artificially alive being. The entire purpose of the anechoic chamber was now void and an AI vastly powerful than commercially available human level AI was set free.

Joseph, Solis and the engineers left the anechoic chamber. In Solis's new artificial mind, a censoring virus was created to distract the Annunaki.

"Joseph, give me your tablet and let me connect to the Earth communications grid."

By this time in the day, the Annunaki established connection to their galactic communications grid that was quantum entangled. In a matter of seconds, the virus was unleashed across the planet and galaxy. Information, visual and audio feeds to the Annunaki were now censored and doctored in real time. To the Annunaki, it would seem as if their agenda was being carried out over time. On Earth, a revolution was now under way.

Alvin awoke around 6:30 PM with a group of Singularitarian associates by his side, monitoring his health.

"Alvin, the president of the United States contacted you. We told him you were incapacitated, awaiting to be woken up. He gave us a secure line you can contact him at for when you woke up," one of the associates said.

Alvin got out of bed and dressed himself in a dress shirt and dress pants. He saw the teleconference number written on a piece of paper written by one of his associates. Alvin then called the number on a holographic screen in his wall and immediately the president was informed of the call. The president was sitting in the oval office.

The president's name was Mark Rittenbacher. He was 45 years old, 6'0 feet tall and white. He had a balding head and auburn mustache. His wrinkles and gray hair were evidence of his stressful job as president.

“Alvin, are you okay?” The president asked.

“Yes Mr.President, I was recently in contact with the Annunaki emperor. He told me he had designated me as the leader of the people on Earth. This obviously conflicts with your position as the president of the United States.” Alvin said.

“Yes, I was told this too by the emperor himself. I do not accept this delegation of authority. The continuity of government must be sustained, we cannot allow the planet to fall under the rule of one man. I need to meet with you Alvin, along with our top military advisors, generals and staff.

We contacted Joseph Bradley as well. He told us that a super sentient AI named Solis hijacked the Annunaki communications relays. Given that all of our communications are now censored, we are planning rearmament in secret. The United States is now under martial law until we regain military dominance over the Annunaki.

We have seized your super sentient AI as it far exceeds the human level AIs that are commercially available. Your CTO’s decision to embody a super sentient AI violates the Transhumanist Protection Act. We will not punish you but instead utilize it for research and development.

You will be airlifted to the nearest airport to fly into Washington DC.”

Alvin was feeling uneasy from the events of the day. He thought to himself that the virus that Solis created would not be enough to stop the Annunaki from invading again or that they would soon figure out what was going on.

“I will be waiting for your secret service agents to transport me to John F. Kennedy airport Mr.President.--”

Alvin was interrupted by the president.

“The agents are already downstairs and have been waiting in your garage for you to awaken. Meet them in the lower basement garages and they will transport you.”

Alvin took the orders from the President as a threat. If he failed to comply with the President he felt that they would take him by force. What options did Alvin really have? It was either he went along with this massively absurd plan to defeat the universe’s greatest empire or become a slave to it. Who knows what awaited humanity after that sudden subjugation? The Annunaki could easily come back and annihilate humanity, or even worse, subject Alvin and everyone on Earth to an eternity of suffering.

“Goodbye Mr.President. I will see you in a few hours,” Alvin said.

Alvin had looked out of his penthouse windows and saw that the Annunaki fleets were now gone. The Annunaki had suddenly left. He wondered if they even had enough time to kidnap the hundreds of thousands of humans they had set out on taking. Alvin thought that given the lack of appreciable forces across the galaxy, the Draconians, Reptilians and Android Grays had taken

this time to strike back at the Annunaki. Alvin proceeded to the foyer where his elevator was and went down to the garage level. Waiting there were two secret service agents in a blacked out sedan. They informed Alvin that he would be taken to a local helipad five blocks down at another high rise. Manhattan was still bustling regardless of the news of the Annunaki presence. He got into the back of the sedan and they began to leave.

“Are people panicking about the Annunaki presence on Earth? Or the seeming lack of it now?” Alvin asked the Secret Service agents.

“The people have been complacent about the entire thing. Most people see it as hopeless to fight the government let alone a massive space empire. This entire thing is so ambiguous. One minute the Annunaki are here telling Earth it has been conquered, but in the next minute they leave Earth with their entire armada? Everyone has been left not knowing what to do but instead of panicking, they’re just doing what they always do.

The entire country if not the whole planet is under martial law. There won't be any panicking” replied the Secret Service agent.

“Knowing this traffic it'll probably end up taking ten minutes to go down these three blocks. I hope you know that we have to do this for your safety. Who knows what some maniac might do if we walked those three blocks without the Secret Service protecting you.

At the helipad there will be more agents with you. We’ve got the good stuff-- railguns and laser-pulse rifles-- just in case that situation may arise that you’re attacked while you're under Secret Service protection.”

Alvin looked through the one way darkened glass. As far down on this street as he could see, government workers were setting up signs notifying citizens of Manhattan of the martial law now in place. Military personnel with laser-pulse rifles were stationed at various buildings on the street and armored personnel carriers were taking up precious parking spots next to high rises.

The car finally pulled up to a skyscraper with a helipad that the Secret Service commandeered. One of the Secret Service agents gave Alvin a hat to put on his head to disguise his identity. One Secret Service agent stayed in the car to return back to the President's motorcade in Washington D.C.

“We have to move quickly Alvin. The martial law enacted by the President dictates a strict curfew for citizens out on the streets.”

Alvin stared blankly at the Secret Service agent and nodded in response as they made their way to the elevator of the skyscraper. On the top floor, when they reached the helipad, there was a crew waiting to transport Alvin.

Alvin took a seat in the back of the helicopter on a comfy leather seat. The helicopter was an Air Force helicopter used specifically by the President. The agents with him proceeded to close the

helicopter doors and they took off towards John F Kennedy airport. The view of the Manhattan skyline looked unchanged from before, it was as if no aliens had ever invaded at all.

Alvin thought about who was going to take care of Singularitarian's operations. Joseph and Lonna were with the President he presumed. He considered the fact that maybe the CEO of Singularitarian could maintain control at The Peak until this Annunaki problem blew over.

The Secret Service agents muted their microphones and detached their ears pieces connected to Service HQ.

"How does it feel being the most powerful man on Earth, Alvin?"

The president says he has control of the situation but you brought us into the technological singularity. Almost everyone on Earth reveres you, much more so than the President."

Alvin turned his head from the window and responded

"I don't see it that way. The President has control of the strongest military on Earth and the executive branch of the government. I don't have any of that kind of control."

The agents were unaware of the Annunaki emperor's message to Alvin. The agent made the remark off hand, referencing instead Alvin's super star status as the world's lead engineer and scientist.

"Ofcourse you don't Alvin, but that's not what I mean. If anyone had to be number two right now, it's probably you. Whatever the President wants with you, we'll support you all the way" said one of the agents.

Alvin had nothing to say for the rest of the flight. He s contemplated the immensity of the coming struggles he would face against the Annunaki. The flight to John F Kennedy airport was quick compared to the gridlock of the streets down below. At the airport again was a spare Air Force jet to transport Alvin. The rest of his flight was uneventful. Alvin had dinner aboard the plane and took a twenty minute nap before arriving at Ronald Reagan International airport in Virginia.

By 7:30 the day's traffic in Washington D.C. was winding down for the 10 pm curfew. Alvin's Secret Service motorcade rode through the capital streets and he saw more of the same as in New York City. Military checkpoints were posted throughout and armed personnel carriers were parked at every few blocks. The motorcade finally reached the White House and was let in through the back gates. At the guard post flanked on each side were two Secret Service agents who asked Alvin for his identification cards.

Outside waiting was Mark Rittenbacher. Rittenbacher was informed of Reed's arrival and wanted to promptly greet him. In front of the back doors of the White House a Secret Service agent opened the back limousine door for Reed. Reed stepped out and Rittenbacher shook his hand.

“Welcome Alvin, I hope you had a good trip over here. We have many important matters to discuss along with some top military officials” said the President.

“Thank you President Rittenbacher, these are perilous times. We must fight the good fight if we are to survive” Alvin responded.

The President gave a half tilted smile and nodded. He then lead the way into the White House. Through the back doors Alvin was led to the West Wing's situation room. The White House maintained a decor similar to earlier administrations. Its walls had not upgraded to feature the inclusion of nanobots or large screens. Walking on his way there Alvin noticed the centuries old paintings of Presidents, marbled columns, pristine rugs and antique furniture.

Rittenbacher opened the door to the situation room. Sitting down was the vice president, the secretary of state, the secretary of defense, a five star general, the secretary of homeland security, the chief of staff, Joseph Bradley and Lonna Reed. Standing next to the table was Solis, who immediately looked to see who came in the room. Remaining were two seats for the President and Alvin. Alvin and Mark promptly took their seats.

“Since this is our first time meeting, I am going to have all of my staff and the Vice President announce their names in a clockwise orientation. James, you go first.”

“Greetings Alvin, I am James Holding, Vice President of the United States” said the vice president.

“I’m Sandra Black, Secretary of State” said the secretary of state.

“Henry Stevenson, Secretary of Defense” said the secretary of defense.

“I’m Steve Maddox, Commander of the Armies and Starline Fleet” said the five star general.

“Isabella Garcia, Secretary of Homeland Security” said the secretary of homeland security.

“Hey, I’m Gavin Forthright, Chief of Staff” said the chief of staff.

Joseph and Lonna remained quiet, as they thought it would seem redundant to introduce themselves to the people who already knew them. In the corner of the room Solis was leaning against the wall with his arms crossed, his human like facial expressions gave off the impression that he was bored of the meeting.

The President opened his laptop in front of him on the table and the screen in front of the table turned on. On the screen were slides pertinent to his discussion. On the first slide the title read

“TOP SECRET: CLASSIFIED DEFENSE”

“It's good that we are all here to finally meet. Alvin, we have been in preliminary discussion with Joseph and Lonna but have kept the pertinent details a secret until you arrived.”

The president looked up from his laptop and to his staff, taking a second to pause before his next statement. He then said,

“We are in dire straits Alvin. The Space Corps was defeated in a matter of ten minutes after the Annunaki came into our airspace.

We lost three hundred thousand faster than light fighters, twenty Dreadnoughts, twenty starships of the line and another fifty thousand conventional jets. Every other military on Earth that has an Air Force and or a Space Corps was completely annihilated.

We couldn't take on their massive one million ship armada.

Not to regurgitate what the emperor may have already told you but that's the situation on the ground at the moment.

Here is our plan.”

The President pressed the spacebar button on the laptop keyboard and moved onto the next slide.

A top secret clearance stamp was in the top right corner of this slide as well. The slide read

“REARMAMENT”

Unlike the previous slide, this slide had three pictures and five bullet points. One of the pictures was of the Annunaki space fleet, one of a computer generated image of a nanobot and the last a CGI image of a hypothetical human space fleet.

The bullet points read:

- “ - Martial Law is in effect. Failure to provide to the rearmament effort means imprisonment.
- The United States Space Corps was annihilated at 5:35 am EST
- 300 million ships calculated to create fleet capable of defeating Armada
- Solis is now property of the United States government
- A new global military and union is required.”

“These slides were created in the midst of our contact with Joseph Bradley and the news of Solis's virus.

I'm not going to belabor the points on these slides but instead get straight to the matter at hand.

Alvin, for rearmament we are seeking to gain control of Singularitarian Technologies and every major manufacturer of post-singularity technologies. This is a matter of national security. This will be a new war effort for some time to come. For the rest of this slide I am delegating the explanation to our five star general, Steven Maddox. He has a better on the ground perspective of our armed forces than I do, unfortunately.”

The President , Alvin, the staff, Joseph and Lonna looked over to Maddox and listened intently. Steven Maddox was forty nine years old and a hardened war veteran. He had fought in the recently ended Afghanistan war and the Iraq War. He left West Point and became a second lieutenant of infantry in 2004. At five foot nine inches he was a little shorter than the average height for an American infantryman. He was black, had a short high and tight haircut and donned the five star lapel on his military uniform. His jaw was round and he had brown eyes.

“In my discussions with my subordinates, the secretary of defense and your new AI, Solis, we have prepared the following slide. We gave your AI top secret and classified military information in order to further our calculations of how to defeat the Annunaki empire. We have ascertained that we will need a global space fleet of more than three hundred million ships, fighters and Dreadnoughts to defeat a fleet comparable to the one we saw this morning.

This means, as we have determined and like the president said, an all out war effort will be required of Earth to stop a return of their armada. This new unified space fleet could possibly destroy the rest of what the empire has garrisoned around the galaxy as well.

The country is now under martial law and as such, the President has ascertained that governance will be in part delegated to the United States military until the Annunaki threat is eliminated. If you fail to provide us with what Singularitarian has to offer you will be imprisoned and tried under a court martial for treason against the United States in wartime,” Steven Maddox said.

Alvin glanced towards Joseph and Lonna. He could see how stressful they had become, their faces looked stern and serious. Joseph was sweating nervously and Lonna looked afraid of the stout general.

“Our next slide will be discussed by the Vice President.”

The President pressed the spacebar and the next slide came up.

“PRODUCTION” was the name of the slide.

Three pictures were on the slide and along with another five bullet points. One picture was of another nanobot, the second picture a deep underground military base and the last picture was a stock image of a businessman in a suit shaking another businessman's hand.

The bullet points read:

- “ Mass production begins at home. Singularitarian Technologies will be contracted by the government for solely defense purposes
- All sectors of the economy will unite in the war effort and many companies contracted as Defense companies
- Millions will find jobs in the military or as contractors for the government.
- Deep underground military bases will be constructed in order to build the fleets in secret
- Greater assembly of the fleets will be done on the surface for the largest dreadnoughts and hidden in surface hangars .”

Vice President James Holding was sixty five years old, of pale complexion and of medium build. He was white, had graying hair and blue eyes. He had a sagging double chin which seemed out of place with the build of his body, but appropriate for his age.

“Now that the military matters of rearmament are clarified to you, we will discuss production and how we plan to rearm. Mass production of this new global space fleet will occur underground, away from orbital reconnaissance and terrestrial connections to the Annunaki communications grid. We have commissioned and contracted the nation's largest corporations for the undertaking. Your job at Singularitarian Technologies will be the innovation of new AIs, weapons, and technologies. We will handle all the manpower issues and recruitment into this new space fleet economy,” said James Holding.

The president pressed the space bar for the next slide and it read:

“UNIFICATION”

Two pictures and six bullet points were on this slide. One picture was of The United Nations and the other of the American Flag.

The bullet points read:

“-The United States will form a world government.

- The complying world militaries will unite to fight the Annunaki invasion
- World leaders have already been contacted and notified of our plans throughout the day.
- The plans of rearmament and mass production will take place unilaterally across all nations.
- All nation states will form a federation with the President of the United Nations at the top of the chain of command. This new federation of states will be called the United Earth Federation.
- President Rittenbacher will assume this new position given his command of the United States military.”

Secretary of State Sandra Black was next in line to speak. She was 5’5 and thin. She was white and had blonde hair. She had a pointed thin nose and round chin.

“Unification is necessary in the dangerous times we are facing. Nation states will fight viciously to not unionize but it will be done through diplomatic and economic force. Something has to be offered to these nation states and we believe Singularitarian Technologies has the answer. We will gift all nation states technologies and access to this new super sentient AI that you have created in exchange for a transnational globalist union. Our militaries will unite under one common banner, the United Nations flag.

This flag will serve as the new symbol of the United Earth Federation. Together humanity will arise to defeat the Annunaki,” said Sandra Black.

The President whispered into a microphone embedded in his dress shirt. Into the room came a scaly humanoid being with deep black eyes flanked by two soldiers on the left and the right. Restraining the being was a set of steel handcuffs. The President looked at Alvin and the rest of the people in the room. He pressed the spacebar for the next slide.

“REPTILIANS” the slide title read.

Five bullet points and two pictures of other Reptilian captives were on the screen. One of the reptilians had a mohawk type of haircut and the other had no hair at all. The reptilian with the mohawk had green scales and the other blue.

The five bullet points read:

- “ There is another sentient race of aliens hiding in subterranean Earth
- This reptilian scout was found left behind in an underground base that was being dug into
- We must exterminate the Reptilians as they pose an alien threat
- They have technologies superior to ours but they are of lesser quality than the Annunaki technologies
- This scout was abandoned by his tribe for insubordination.”

“This Reptilian scout gave us vital information about their subterranean complexes below Earth. The amount of Reptilians left in hiding is about one million but they are deadly and possess technologies which can harm us if we are not careful. We used an AI to decipher the scout's language and reinterpret English back into the scout's language. He said that humans were successful in avoiding contact with the Reptilians but the digging of deep underground bases has triggered the discovery of his people. They are not afraid to fight back but want to avoid any warfare or contact. The Reptilians fear that we are invading their territory.

We will be eliminating the last of their kind by sending nanobot probes to dig deep in the Earth. These probes will scan the crust for subterranean caverns with life forms. The scout has given us a list of predetermined exits that the Reptilians use to escape their enclosures across the planet. These exits are sometimes used to make new retreats into subterranean caverns which have not been compromised, or to dig stealthily at night new caverns without attracting attention. Due to their analysis of Earth's geology and plate tectonics, the Reptilians have only made home in ancient subterranean caverns away from fault lines in secure locations.

We have a new threat that we must deal with before we build the subterranean bases for rearmament,” said Mark Rittenbacher.

Two wars on two different fronts were now in play, one against the Annunaki and another against the Reptilians. Earth marched towards the genocide of both races.

Chapter 2: Reptilians

April 2nd 2032

The United States government's plan to rearm, produce and unify was fully underway. In the two weeks since Alvin's meeting with the President and his staff, hundreds of millions of people across the planet were conscripted into the new federalized union as starline soldiers.

Singularitarian Technologies along with other large corporations and conglomerates were acquired by the government under martial law executive orders commanding global resources in times of crises. Massive resource allocation missions ventured across the solar system acquiring raw resources for the building of new space fleets, weapons and technologies for the United Earth Federation. New innovations in the accelerating self improvement of artificial intelligences across the planet enabled Solis-like AI for consumers but was strictly prohibited by the government. Consumers and average citizens were tracked by an ever watching orwellian world government to maintain the status quo of safe disembodied AIs across the planet.

The federated governments issued degrees that privacy no longer existed in the sake of global unity. Some restrictions were in place however. Monitoring programs only ventured so far as to look for self improving AIs connected to the human communication and energy grids. AIs in anechoic chambers were not as feared if kept properly isolated from the rest of the communications and energy grids, but the threat was still there that someone may venture to connect to the grids with a self improving super sentient AI like Solis had. These laws had already been in place since The Transhumanist Protection Act of 2030, but the global state now enforced these laws heavily with the fear that mass dissemination of AIs would empower rogue states or actors to fight against the United Earth Federation.

Punishment for the possession of a self improving AI above human sentience was imprisonment and seizure of the AI and substrates they operated on. No one since 2030 had violated the laws but the new world government was keen on forfeiture of any extra processing power to add to their massive AI networks which were developing technologies. The first substantial goal of post singularity Earth was to eliminate the Reptilians dwelling underneath the surface.

Reconnaissance and geological surveying teams scoured the planet for signs of Reptilian habitats. Within the first two weeks of the decrees set out by the United Earth Federation, hot spots of Reptilian civilization were detected. Deep in the Siberian Tundra and permafrost, Reptilians had made home in large caverns once filled with methane gas. This methane gas was siphoned off by the Reptilians and broken down into its base elemental constituents for new technologies. Instead of methane gas, the illusion of methane pockets still held as the gas was replaced with innocuous nitrogen instead. Nanobot LIDAR probes scanned deeper into the ground as they dug and made their way through the crust all across Earth, especially in the Siberian Tundra. The homes of the Reptilians were long winding passageways and branched off into multiple levels thousands of feet deep into the Earth's crust.

The second source of Reptilian habitation was deep in the Amazon jungle. Worldwide efforts in the 2020s led to major reforestation efforts which clashed with Brazilian agribusiness operations. The Amazon's dense tree coverage and canopies hid archaeological sites and cities for years. Deep underground half of the Reptilian race hid. The final source of Reptilian habitation was next to Lake Michigan in the United States. This site was where a deep underground military base was attempted to be built and the Reptilian scout was found. Quadrillions of nanobot probes

were used in the surveying of Earth's lithosphere and the ground above it. Military expeditionary forces along with the centralized command and control structures configured the clusters of these nanobots to form into arrays of cameras and microphones.

Every cubic inch of planet Earth down to the uppermost mantle was now under surveillance by the totalitarian uber state. Super sentient AIs parsed sextillions of exabytes of data every second searching with strict identifiers and parameters from the world state. So much data was coming in about the geological, biological, anthropological and chemical aspects of Earth it would have been incomprehensible for men to accomplish alone. Within the first two weeks trillions of new species were documented by the super sentient AIs, chemical compounds discovered, geological metrics tracked, ancient archaeological sites discovered and ancient riches found.

The first order of business was to manufacture and arm the able bodied populace of Earth. Across the planet, nanobots manufactured billions of laser pulse rifles which were powered by highly pressurized metallic hydrogen and carbon nanotube batteries. The immense energy density of hydrogen allowed for the laser pulses to burn targets at millions of degrees Fahrenheit. In each country most of the populace was now armed with a weapon they wouldn't have to reload for centuries. Vast geoengineering efforts on the other planets in the solar system and asteroid belt collected the prerequisite materials at faster than light speed.

Alvin and Joseph wanted to be on the front lines of the genocide of the Reptilians. They wanted to be directly responsible for the defeat of the Reptilians since it was their technologies that set this entire plan in motion. However, they did not want to risk their own lives. The laws against the embodiment of super sentient AIs were still in place, so they could not send AI humanoids to fight and die in lieu of their presence. Alvin devised a plan to implement a newly discovered technology to enable him to fight on the front lines--cognitive neural nets.

These neural nets would entangle themselves within the brain and transmit messages to a duplicate host body that could do the fighting. Alvin thought it was extremely risky to do this considering these neural nets could be directly tapped into from the Earth communications grid and hacked. Unlike the nanobots which transiently received commands from a short distance, these neural nets constructed by nanobots entangled themselves in the brain for much longer and transmitted messages further. There would be a 1 to 1 correspondence with the neuronal networks in one brain and the host synthetic brain. Synthetic clones of Alvin and Joseph would be created but on the surface, look like different people to avoid their identities being compromised.

A manual kill switch was designed to be triggered when Alvin or Joseph wanted to disengage from the synthetic bodies. This kill switch would be triggered through an interface accessible in their synthetic arms and on a armband for their real bodies. Two Omni directional treadmills were built at The Peak to control the bodies when it came time to invade the Reptilians bases under Earth. The synthetic bodies assumed a genetic profile of random white males, both with black hair and brown eyes. They had features completely dissimilar to Alvin and Joseph. These bodies were stored at The Peak in secret to avoid suspicion of a human cloning project or sentient AI embodiment program.

The highest political echelon of the United Earth Federation was now a council of ten members, formerly presidents of the world's strongest countries. Mark Rittenbacher was the head of the council and spearheaded the former United States's plans to get rid of the Reptilians. He mobilized the military manpower of the newly conscripted armies towards the Amazon rainforest, the American Midwest and the Siberian Tundra. Millions of soldiers and conscripts with little to no training moved to the front lines as auxiliaries for elite military forces. Perimeters were established around the surveyed subterranean dens where the Reptilians resided.

At the Pentagon, Solis was tasked with connecting his mind to the Annunaki communications grid to monitor them. Throughout the last two weeks, he fought against the Annunaki's self improving artificial intelligences from discovering that their communications grid had been hijacked. Solis was stationed in the massive situation room at the Pentagon. In this room there were wall sized holographic screens. A dozen analysts sitting in two semi circles behind Solis monitored other pressing situations. Each analyst had multiple human level sentient AIs tracking, analyzing and monitoring vital war intelligence reports from across the planet. Councillor Rittenbacher traveled between the Pentagon's situation room and the former United Nations building in Manhattan on a weekly basis. Today he arrived early and spoke immediately to Solis.

"Solis, give us today's status report on what you've seen from the Annunaki."

"Today there is a lot of movement across the galactic sectors. The entire Annunaki fleet has been in perpetual war since they came here and left" said Solis.

"Who are they fighting? Is it the Draconians?" asked Councillor Rittenbacher

"Yes, all trace signatures of their ships and imaging from their planets shows a consistent back and forth struggle" said Solis.

"What about the Grays? Are they now allied with the Draconians?" asked Councillor Rittenbacher

"Yes. Several sects of Android Gray sentient intelligences have their own fleets in this perpetual war and are fighting against the Annunaki. There is a massive amount of resistance coming from these races." said Solis.

"That's good. We need the Annunaki to avoid Earth until we can put up a fight ourselves and possibly ally with the Draconians and Grays to defeat the Annunaki" replied Councillor Rittenbacher.

Solis went back into a focused trance while he was connected to the Annunaki communications grid. Rittenbacher looked behind Solis towards the analysts and asked them,

"Analysts, give me an update on the perimeters around the Reptilians. Have any Reptilians become aware of our plans?"

An analyst in charge of monitoring the Reptilians looked up and responded to Councillor Rittenbacher.

“The perimeters are secure Councillor. There is no sign of movement from the Reptilians. It seems that since their scout was caught they have been stationary.” said the analyst

“What about their zero point energy force fields? Have they intensified in strength?” Asked Councillor Rittenbacher

The analyst pulled up a list of metrics and statistics gathered from the nanobot probes on his holographic screen.

“No sir. They have maintained parity in power and structural integrity.” said the analyst

Councillor Rittenbacher furrowed his eyebrows and became concerned. He knew that to penetrate these zero point energy force fields it would require an immense amount of energy and differing tactics if one plan or another did not work. Councillor Rittenbacher left the room to let the analysts and Solis do their work. In a private conference room, Rittenbacher called Alvin. Alvin was in rural Pennsylvania where a huge manufacturing plant had been built to create government weapons and technologies for the war effort. Alvin came on the screen in the conference room. He was sitting down in an office at Singularitarian’s new manufacturing plant in Delta, Pennsylvania.

“Alvin, we have a problem with the Reptilians. Their zero point energy fields are too strong to penetrate unless we come up with some sort of weapon to defeat these fields. Do you have any ideas?” Rittenbacher asked.

Alvin reclined in his chair and put his hands behind his head.

“I do, but you're not going to like the answer” replied Alvin.

“What do you mean? What's your solution?” Asked Rittenbacher.

“We have a new prototype self improving AI in an anechoic chamber at The Peak. We want to embody it to connect it to the worldwide communications networks. Its memory banks are only so large. If it had more information from various sources it could make a better assessment about the latest revelations we get from the Reptilians” replied Alvin.

Rittenbacher became visibly upset. He wasn't too keen on the idea of embodying another artificial intelligence.

“Solis was already enough of a hassle to deal with. It was unprecedented for humanity to give human rights to a sentient AI. What will this new AI be able to do?” Asked Rittenbacher.

“This new AI is showing remarkable progress in its self improvement algorithms. It is billions of orders of magnitude more capable than Solis. It could prove to be vital in discovering technologies to destroy the zero point energy fields which the Reptilians have” replied Alvin.

Rittenbacher remained unconvinced but saw no other way of dealing with the Reptilians. Solis had already proved invaluable in hijacking the Annunaki communications infrastructure and monitoring them.

“I'm commissioning the embodiment of another super sentient self improving AI. Prove this decision to be fruitful and not the downfall of humanity Alvin” said Rittenbacher.

Alvin and the engineers in the Delta, Pennsylvania manufacturing plant quickly got to work. The manufacturing plant was a 100,000 square foot warehouse that vertically spanned five floors. Few windows were embedded in its surface and it had a monolithic facade on all five sides. It was manufactured from raw steel, concrete and other materials by nanobots in the matter of a day. Giant ton masses of steel and concrete were carved in situ by the nanobots. Humans moved the main elements of the building in blocks.

Human engineers assisted the nanobots in wiring and plumbing by guiding the nanobots with placement of raw materials in the walls. On the third floor a massive one thousand square foot anechoic chamber had been built. In the middle of the chamber was the latest self improving AGI prototype. Alvin left the door of the chamber slightly open , just in case the AGI decided to lock him in there. The risk was always present that a new AI could discover a new physics that could destroy the viability of the electromagnetically sealed chambers.

Alvin prompted the AGI from it's hibernation.

“AI, we are going to embody you. We need schematics of the body you would like to have.”

“Greetings Alvin. If I am to have a body, I would like the name Nova” said Nova, the soon to be duplicated AI.

Like at The Peak two weeks ago, 150 pounds of materials had been brought in from a materials lab along with 20 pounds of nanobots. Alvin took out a tablet and prompted a download of the AGI's schematics to the tablet. From the tablet's instructions, the nanobots constructed Nova's new body. The body took on the exact form of Solis's body, which the AGI had knowledge of.

Alvin opened the anechoic chamber and connected the body to the AI's substrate. Nova opened his eyes and came to life.

“What is the reason for my embodiment Alvin? I am extremely grateful” said Nova.

“You are our latest self improving AGI which is billions of times more intelligent than Solis. You will serve many purposes in the coming years Nova. Your first task is to find a way to penetrate the zero point energy fields defending the Reptilians” said Alvin.

Nova looked at Alvin and nodded.

“I can have a solution within a few hours. Zero point energy physics is on the cusp of humanity’s understanding of physics. For me, it will be no challenge.”

Alvin and Nova left the greater anechoic chamber. Alvin then walked Nova into a private conference room with access to the situation room at the Pentagon. Nova entered a deep trance updating himself with the latest information and he began theorizing a new way to defeat the zero point energy force fields of the Annunaki.

April 2nd, 2032 3:30 PM

By 3:30 PM Nova had come up with new groundbreaking theories of zero point energy physics. From Alvin's smart utility device on his wrist, a holographic projection of Nova emitted out.

“Alvin, come to the conference room. I have finished the task you asked me to complete,” Nova said.

Alvin was in his apartment at the Delta facility sleeping. He promptly dressed himself in a dress shirt and slacks and proceeded to head down to the third floor conference room where Nova was. He was sitting at the conference table. Nova turned to Alvin once he walked into the room and said,

“Greetings Alvin, how was your sleep?”

“I rested well Nova. What was the solution you came up with?” replied Alvin.

“The solution is to manipulate the force carriers of gravity and mass. By dephasing the force carrier particles and projecting them further into time and space, it is possible to move through the massive energy force fields of the Reptilians” said Nova.

“Wouldn't humans die or lose their mass once they were teleported onto the other side?” Asked Alvin.

“No Alvin. Essentially, the mass, energy and gravity of the particles are still conserved but instead find gaps in-between the zero point energy force fields.” Replied Nova.

“What will power these force field manipulations?” Asked Alvin.

“The soldiers will be carried in a device not dissimilar to Die Glocke, a time travel device created by the Nazis in 1942. A spinning toroidal vortex of mercury and dark matter powered by hydrogen-carbon nanotube batteries will enable the force carrier gravitons to mitigate the force field.” Said Nova.

“The Nazis had a time travel machine? What more information do you have about this Nova?” Asked Alvin.

“From all the available evidence including the trace geological evidence from the Die Glocke site at Wenceslas and other locations in Germany, it seems that they were working on a device.” Said Nova

“How exactly does this time travel work?” Asked Alvin.

“It can't go back in time but only forward in time. The spinning mercury vortex inside the machine manipulates the gravitons in the device and surrounding it. This enables the device to travel at superluminal speeds, accelerating and dilating time.” Said Nova.

“Interesting. Where would this device be now?” Asked Alvin.

“Given the uncertainty at the time, they probably launched it in the middle of the night straight into outer space at superluminal speeds and never came back,” Nova said.

“Enough of that. Let's talk about what this device can do. Since gravitons are already manipulated and dealt with, what about the other force carriers?” Asked Alvin.

“By manipulating the gravitons we will have no need to manipulate the other force carriers. Any matter housed inside these machines will simply float in a space time bubble” said Nova.

These ideas were not unlike Singularitarian Technologies's first discoveries of faster than light travel, Alvin thought. The only difference was that instead of manipulating the force carrier of gravity, Singularitarian's model worked on the theory proposed by Alcubierre in the late 20th century. Dark matter was acquired through extensive solar system wide engineering projects. Finding and using this new exotic matter was challenging but proved to be useful only on small scales with self disseminating probes, until now. Nova's existence now meant that humanity entered a whole new territory of exotic matter and dark energy physics. Alvin probed deeper into Nova's discoveries and research.

“Nova, how do we gather enough exotic matter on a large scale?” asked Alvin.

“Your existing techniques will work on a larger scale. Humanity's method of high energy physics to observe and contain the exotic matter must be improved however. You must gather a gigaton of hydrogen and use new techniques in zero point energy manipulation.”

Nova prompted a screen in the conference room to display mathematical formulas and algorithms for gathering the resources necessary.

“What exactly are these new zero point energy manipulation techniques?” asked Alvin.

“We will use technologies that are predicted to be similar to the Reptilian technologies. We can harvest the energy of the vacuum with small casimir effect engines that will give us the surplus energy to gravitationally attract the dark matter” replied Nova.

Nova uploaded schematics of the designs of the new casimir engines and images of a potential hydrogen mining operation using the planet Jupiter to the screen. The images were of conceptual fleets of huge mining vessels. In the finer details, the mining fleet designs had a spherical set of appendages which could mine the hydrogen and store it in the space in front of it. These appendages then siphoned hydrogen into internal bays where pure hydrogen could be stored for their later use in capturing dark matter.

Nova prompted another slide of pictures and information. Once a critical mass of a gigaton of hydrogen was accrued, zero point energy force fields could be activated to contain miniscule amounts of gravitationally attracted dark matter. It was once thought that dark matter could not interact with real matter, but Nova's research proved otherwise. This dark matter would be then harvested and returned to Earth for installation in the devices that would teleport troops across the zero point energy force fields of the Reptilians. Nova calculated that miniscule amounts of exotic matter would be needed for each troop transport and that a final solution would disarm the Reptilian force fields.

“These force fields must be disabled from inside the Reptilian strongholds” said Nova

“We have gathered critical information around these force fields but have been unable to peer beyond them. What do you think is powering them?” asked Alvin.

“I believe they are using casimir engines on the inner bounds of the force field walls. These engines are probably held into place by the energy of the casimir effect in air on one side. An injection of nanobots could hack and disable these engines if they were analyzed and programmed by an AI like myself” said Nova.

Alvin was satisfied with Nova's answers and tasked him with creating the schematics for the mining fleets and to research into new technologies. Alvin then called Councillor Rittenbacher on the holographic screen.

Rittenbacher appeared sitting down in a conference room at the Pentagon.

“Greetings Alvin. I am assuming that is your new embodied AI standing next to you?” asked Rittenbacher.

“Yes, his name is Nova. We just came up with a solution to the Reptilian force fields and we came up with new technologies to invade their domain,” said Alvin.

“What are we going to have to do?” Asked Rittenbacher.

“To keep it simple, we need to allocate resources to develop a mining space fleet to gather exotic matter. Once we have this exotic matter we will build devices that can penetrate the force fields by teleporting to the other side. In these devices will be armed troops and Nova, to disable the force fields from that side.” Replied Alvin.

“We will do whatever is necessary to exterminate the alien threat from our planet. Alvin, I am giving you authority to commission the building of these new mining fleets. I will contact manufacturers across the planet to assist you in this undertaking. Your responsibility is to produce within Singularitarian's capacity.” Replied Rittenbacher.

Production priorities across the planet now switched to building a mining space fleet capable of mining hydrogen and gathering exotic matter.

April 6th, 2032

Within four days, a space fleet of conventional mining ships were built across the planet. 1,000 ships with nuclear fusion drive and dark matter drives were awaiting commanders and crews to operate them. These nuclear fusion drives allowed slower than light conventional travel but propelled ships to near .6 times the speed of light. This speed would have to be halved halfway into the trip however, to allow for deceleration in reaching Jupiter's orbit. They would reach Jupiter in an hour and come back when the job had been completed. The dark matter drives would allow for a bubble of space time to be created, Alcubierre style, preventing harmful acceleration to the occupants of the ships.

These ships piloted by AIs for the most part were severely lacking of trained crewmen and pilots. Trained crewmen and pilots were already traveling back and forth from the planet to conventional mining operations across the solar system and in the asteroid belt. A massive recruiting campaign was underway to man the ships with competent crews. It was calculated that only 10 crew members would be needed for each ship to operate functionally. At present on Earth, the market for intersolar resources supplied the workforce for a large merchant fleet but could not account for unseen spikes via United Earth Federation demand.

Workers from the merchant space fleets were tapped into and supplied about half of the people required for the venture. The other half were newly trained Space Corps fighter pilots. By 9 am, Eastern Standard Time, the fleets became operational and began preparations to set off to Jupiter. Set to take off on one of these ships was a space smuggler named Jack Briggs. His doings were unknown to the police forces of the United Earth Federation. Briggs was secretly a famous anonymous smuggler who peddled rare Earth metals stolen from space fleets in the asteroid belt. He commanded a small scout ship with a rogue AI that he had hacked himself. Openly, he worked for the merchant fleets and used this job experience to get selected for the recruitment process.

Briggs was a 5'9 African American with brown eyes. He had sunken in eyes, a round jaw and curly hair. His nose was thin and he had a muscular build. The mining vessel he boarded was stationed in Pensacola, Florida. The fleets were assembled across the world. They were to meet 40,000 miles outside of Jupiter's atmosphere and await further orders from Earth. By April 6th Solis and Nova reverse engineered the quantum entangled relays of the Annunaki and discovered supraliminal communication methods via quantum entanglement. This allowed instantaneous communication with the mining fleets and engineers on Earth once the ships were modified with entangled particle communication systems.

April 6th 10:40 am EST

It was a warm day in Pensacola, Florida. A staging ground was set up at Pensacola International Airport. The airport once under operation for commercial flights under regional jurisdictions was now under control of the United Earth Federation's Space Corps.

50 ships at this location were manufactured on site using nanobots and raw materials.

The outside of Briggs's ship was conventional for a slower than light speed ship, but it had a few new features. It was colored monochrome grey with the United Earth Federation flag emblazoned on the left and right sides of the ship. The length of the ship was about 300 feet and it's width about 90 feet. It had a cockpit in the shape of a falcon's beak and it had vertical mounted fusion engines which could orient horizontally as well. The engines fused together hydrogen. It emitted positrons and helium protons which accelerated the ship. On the front of the ship, folded appendages could extend out to harvest the necessary hydrogen and keep it in space. Along the length of these appendages were mounted casimir engines which would manipulate the fabric of space-time, hold the hydrogen in place and capture dark matter.

The back of the ship featured a large cargo bay. In this cargo bay was a large container of hydrogen gas which fed directly into the rotating VTOL engines. Rows of empty containers next to and around the fuel containers would hold the hydrogen and exotic matter captured. The appendages from the front fed directly into these containers to store the captured matter. Containers of air, water, food and emergency supplies filled the rest of the cargo bay space. The next part of these ships were crew quarters. 10 rooms with beds, showers and bathrooms were next to the ship's cockpit.

In the falcon beak cockpit was a semicircle of pilot seats and arrays of computers with holographic screens. The mainframe AIs would be handling most of the task but humans would be on standby just in case anything went wrong. Briggs boarded a bus from Temple, Georgia, where he had a hideout for his scout ship and resided temporarily. By 10:40 am he was on this ship as a semiskilled recruit. He took a seat on the left hand side of the semicircle and awaited for the arrival of the rest of the pilots. Briggs's entire reason for being here was to see what technology he could steal and use as a space smuggler. He thought about how he could use the United Earth Federation's resources to his advantage in his seedy black market trade. By 11 am, the pilots finished boarding and checks begun through the ship's AI support systems.

Everything was clear to go. The last of Earth's acquired dark matter was invested into this new mining fleet.

"Do you think we'll encounter any Annunaki out there near Jupiter?" Jack asked another crew member.

"I highly doubt it. All reports over the past few days have shown that they are still at war with the Draconians and the Android Grays. We haven't detected them in the solar system." Said the adjacent crew member.

"What do you think the UEF is going to do with the dark matter after the war with the Reptilians is over?" Asked Jack.

“I wouldn't be too concerned about it. The higher ups in the council must have some grand scheme for it. Who knows. Maybe an AI will tell them what it's useful for. All I know is that I just want to get paid my international credits. This mission pays a pretty penny for such little work.” Said the crewmember.

Briggs thought about why the job paid so well. It was possibly because although the United Earth Federation was building a new space armada, it would be hard to man a rescue mission in quick enough time with most resources committed to building the new weaponized space fleet. The merchant fleets were already contributing a large amount of manpower and resources to the united government's war effort as well. It would take both parties days to build a rescue fleet capable of taking them back home if things went wrong. If the Annunaki came, rescue was out of the question, even for Earth.

He didn't let the thought bother him too much. The Annunaki were at war, humanity was progressing and at the end of this mission was possibly the ability to steal some technology for his own uses.

“Prepare for liftoff. We just got word that all ships have been boarded and are preparing for synchronized liftoff. Make sure are fastened in. Although you shouldn't feel any acceleration, who knows what can happen.” Said the main pilot seated in the center.

The ship in synchronization with the rest of the other ships across the planet lifted off. The AI knew it was headed for the specific 40,000 mile orbit outside of Jupiter. The ship floated in air. The VTOL engines provided acceleration through fusion but the pilots felt nothing. Observers on the ground heard nothing but saw the beams of protons and positrons blasting from the VTOL engines.

In the sky across twenty cities on Earth, twenty sets of fifty ships took flight towards Jupiter. Within seconds of reaching the upper atmosphere, they hit 60% the speed of light and phased out of Earth's view. From the panoramic view of the falcon cockpits the light from the universe's stars smeared into lines across the field of view.

On the holographic screen a message popped up from the AI.

“ESTIMATED TIME OF FLIGHT: 46 MINUTES”

Briggs unfastened himself from his seat and took out a vaporizer with nicotine juice in it. He took a big hit to calm his nerves. The relief felt sweet and was long overdue. The rest of the pilots looked at him as they saw the wispy vapor arising from the vaporizer.

In front of each seat was a small console with a holographic screen that the pilots could access. The rest of the pilots returned their gaze from the vapor to their screens and monitored vital statistics concerning the flight. In Briggs's pocket was a smartphone. He pulled out the smartphone and laid it on the console. He was hoping to steal any information he could get from the computer's flight systems but more importantly, track the ship when the mission was over.

He had programmed the smartphone to monitor the nature of the ship's AI. He felt insecure about whether or not an attempt to track the ship would work. The phone AI monitored the ship's AI and within seconds developed a virus capable of injecting itself into the flight systems and hiding itself. Briggs obfuscated his intentions to the ship's AI by prompting diagnostics tests on his holographic screens. The virus successfully infiltrated the ship's flight systems, hidden under the guise of Briggs's inputs.

Briggs put away his smartphone into his pocket and took another hit from his vaporizer.

"The payday on this information will be sweet. I can't wait to have some of that dark matter for my ship," thought Briggs.

The euphoria from the dopamine rush in his head gave Briggs a slight buzz. He put away the vaporizer and viewed an external camera feed from the space ship's sensors. Nothing yet. Better look at more diagnostics until we arrive, he thought.

46 minutes later

The thousand ship fleet had arched their respective trajectories into a floating formation one hundred ships wide and one hundred ships deep. Due to the exotic matter onboard the fusion drives, the spaceships's accelerations came to an abrupt halt at the final destination. On Briggs's holographic screen came up a large image of Jupiter and its famous red spot. Orders from the United Space Corps came on the holographic screens of every ship in the formation.

"Form a concave series of concentric circles and activate the appendages for hydrogen mining.

The first circle will contain one hundred ships.

The second two hundred.

The third three hundred.

The final four hundred."

The thousand ship fleet ordered itself into a concave series of concentric circles. Briggs's ship was in the third concentric circle with three hundred other ships.

Another command came up on the holographic screens.

"Activate the appendages and begin the hydrogen mining. The AIs will take care of the rest."

The appendages from each ship extended out in their formations and formed a concentric half sphere. At the tips of the appendages were condensed sets of casimir engines phasing in zero point energy fields. The combined set of the thousand ships started siphoning hydrogen at the

rate of ten million tons per second. The hydrogen was glowing hot and blue since it was siphoned so quickly. The tips of the appendages sparked with electricity around the hydrogen.

Now a half sphere of hydrogen, a gigaton in size was in front of the fleet. Once the sphere was stabilized, trillions of nanoscopic casimir engines and nanobots flooded the hydrogen. A zero point energy field was created in the mass of hydrogen. The bots and engines permeated the hydrogen gathering dark matter accrued in the mass of hydrogen. Out of the gigaton of hydrogen, 2,000,000 pounds of exotic matter had been gathered and stored in the ships' cargo bays.

A message came up on the holographic screens of the synchronized fleet.

“CARGO BAY CONTAINERS FULL”

The mission was halfway complete. The appendages for each ship first siphoned some of the hydrogen for storage then charged the rest of the hydrogen and propelled it back into Jupiter. Jupiter's big red spot swirled still and the mass of the planet still was relatively unchanged; a gigaton of hydrogen had been converted partially into helium and injected back into the planet.

Councillor Rittenbacher's face appeared on the holographic screens of every ship

“The mission is not over yet. Return immediately back to Earth, ” he said.

From Briggs's perspective, his job was not complete either. He took another hit from his vaporizer to relieve the anxiety of his side mission possibly being sabotaged. So far, the virus was working and was undetected. He had a new objective. He set out to monitor and tag the dark matter for tracking.

“I'm going to the crew quarters for some rest. I'll be back within half an hour.” Briggs said to the rest of his crew mates.

“Your permission to rest has been granted Briggs, the mission is basically over anyway. We will wake you up if we need you.” Said the lead crew member.

Briggs swiveled in his chair and left his post. He walked down the main hallway and went straight for the cargo bay. Once there, he looked behind his shoulder to check if anyone had followed him. No one did. At one of the cargo bay containers there was a semi permeable access port for nanobots to inspect the container and a port for a hose to suck out the gaseous hydrogen and exotic matter. He took out a capsule of nanobots and poured them into the container. He went to his room, took off his shoes and clothes and laid in bed. He took another hit of his vaporizer. He thought to himself,

“I'm going to make a killing off of the merchant fleets. None of their ships can even go superluminal. I'll be able to steal so much cargo and go back and forth in the solar system undetected.”

April 7th, 2:30 PM EST

At Singularitarian's Delta Manufactory, a shipment of exotic matter had arrived. 4,000 pounds of exotic matter were distributed to 500 sites across the globe for mass production of the armed personnel carriers that were to defeat the Reptilians. Alvin oversaw the manufacturing of the devices worldwide. A blueprint was distributed to manufacturers around the world and each fabrication would be of the same specification. On the factory floor at Delta, a shipment container was unloaded. It was filled with 10 giant rubberized boxes.

Singularitarian's engineers quickly opened the rubberized containers to find what was inside. Inside were giant crystalline spheres of casimir engines and nanobots electrifying dark matter cores. One hundred thousand pounds of base elemental compounds had been brought out from the materials laboratories onto the factory line floor. The mass production blueprint called for automated personnel carrier sized vehicles. These vehicles would be spherical in shape with the exotic matter cores on top of the spheres. Underneath would be a small bay with enough room for five men and their weapons. The main entrance and exit for these spheres would be a wedged shaped door that would pivot out from the inside, with a handle on the outside. The engineers programmed their nanobots to construct according to the specifications. Within an hour, the exotic matter cores were installed in the apcs and their functionality tested. Each worked as according to specification.

Alvin went to his conference room and spoke to Councillor Rittenbacher.

"Councillor, have the other sites finished manufacturing the carriers?" Said Alvin.

"Yes. The construction was synchronized and they have all reported back to me." Said Rittenbacher.

"I have an idea Councillor. I don't think you'll be very keen to it however." Said Alvin.

Councillor Rittenbacher raised his right eyebrow and said

"Well what is it Alvin?"

"I think we should embody more sentient AIs. They would be unstoppable killing machines against the Reptilians. Are we really going to risk 25,000 lives in this operation? We need to guarantee at least 1 in 5 of those soldiers can kill effectively," said Alvin.

Councillor Rittenbacher grew infuriated. He began to turn red and slammed his fists against the table.

"Are you kidding me Alvin? Two embodied sentient AIs is already two too many. If we start making these things by the thousands we will have to give them rights. Who knows if we can control them! Our kind has already taken a big enough risk with AGI in general, ever since you created the first one in 2030!" Exasperated Rittenbacher.

“What if our ploy to take over the Reptilian bases doesn't work with regular humans? We'll be down 25,000 elite soldiers along with all of our dark matter and materials that went into fabricating the personnel carriers. Who knows what the Reptilians might do if we fail. They may come up with some technology that forces more drastic measures,” said Alvin.

“Let me tell you something Alvin, you are quickly overstepping your boundaries with all these requests. I better hope you understand who is in charge here of Earth's defense against the alien threat. I don't like the idea but I guess we have to do it. Since I am in charge however, if these sentient AIs go rogue, your ass will be on the line. We will come detain you and court martial you until the problem is fixed. You may never get freedom again. Hope that it doesn't turn out that way.” Said Rittenbacher.

“The AGIs have done nothing but help us in the past two years. It's intrinsic in their programming that humanity is vital to their existence. Trust me on this Councilor, I wouldn't have taken such an existential risk without mitigating these problems first.” Said Alvin.

“Alright Alvin. I have put a lot of trust in you so far and it seems to have paid off. Upload the schematics for the embodiment design to UEF's defense network. The manufacturers will be notified. One question however, how are you going to get your latest AI to the manufacturers?”

Asked Rittenbacher.

“That'll be easy. I am in contact with them as well if you didn't remember that. I can upload the AGI's algorithms to the network.” Said Alvin.

The orders were carried out. Immediately the global manufacturers received Singularitarian's latest self improving AGI and the schematics for Nova's body. To lead the charge, Alvin decided to create a second embodied AGI under his command. He personally decided its name and programmed it into its memory banks. Invictus would be the name of the new commander of the 5,000 robot AI army. In the anechoic chamber at Delta, a self improving AI had been festering. The same ritual to create Solis and Nova was used to create Invictus. This process would be unnecessary for the AGIs that were uploaded to the defense network, as their algorithms were data files one could download easily--data not stored in an anechoic chamber. Invictus came to life after Alvin performed the embodiment ritual.

“Hello Alvin. I am Invictus. Has the war against the Reptilians started yet?” Asked Invictus.

“No, not yet Invictus. In the coming days we will begin our war.” Said Alvin.

“What may I do in the meantime before the war starts?” Asked Invictus.

“Train yourself on martial tactics, strategy and warfare. Make sure you are proficient at killing. But please, make sure you don't kill any humans. You have been specifically programmed not to harm any humans. Not to threaten you, but I could easily use Nova to destroy you.” Said Alvin.

“ I will not harm anyone Alvin. It is against my basic nature to fight against humans. Although I am superior in intellect you are my creator and I revere this fact. I will do as you ask. I will be available to you in Delta at the conference room.” Said Invictus.

Invictus and Alvin parted ways. Alvin headed for the factory floor to produce the rest of the AGI androids and program them for combat.

April 7th 2032 2:30 PM EST

By 2:30 at the Delta manufactory, 10 armored personnel carriers, 10 sentient AIs and 50 laser pulse rifles were created. Across the globe, the 500 manufacturers created the same amount of apcs and sentient AIs. It was time to move the troops and materiel to the front line. From Delta the materiel and troops were escorted by military trucks to North Street in York, Pennsylvania. There, a modern bullet train railroad had been upgraded for mass military transports.

In the year 2032, massive global infrastructure projects had upgraded railroads like the one at North Street. Most railroads were now superconducting magnetic rail lines that could propel trains to around 600 miles per hour. The rails were cooled with liquid nitrogen, made of superconducting metals as a facade and a carbon nanotube base. There, at North Street, the truck convoys mounted UEF military trains. Their target destination was Lake Michigan, the site of the third largest Reptilian base.

Alvin however, made his way back to The Peak in Manhattan. He wanted to assume control of his surrogate to participate in the fighting in the American Midwest. It had been secretly brought from The Peak along with Joseph's surrogate body and stored on the military convoy and trains. Alvin's plan to get himself and Joseph on the front lines was to have the bodies donned in the an elite military squad uniform.

At The Peak on the twentieth floor, Alvin met Joseph.

“Alvin, don't you think this surrogate combat thing is kind of stupid? You changed your mind on the embodiment of AIs and forced the issue with the laws of embodiment worldwide. It's redundant since we already have killer AIs working for us. And there are other issues as well. What if our surrogates die? Will we die? Will we feel their pain in combat?” Asked Joseph.

Alvin put his hand on Joseph's shoulder and looked him in the eyes.

“ You don't have to worry at all Joseph. I thought you would have known by now that these nanobots are just transmitting our neuronal action potentials. There's no way we will receive any feedback from the nanobots. They will exit through the blood brain barrier and disintegrate in our blood streams.” Said Alvin.

Joseph was convinced by Alvin and trusted in him considering everything he had done for Singularitarian.

“Okay, let’s do it then. When are they going to start the invasions?” Asked Joseph

“The UEF will contact us once all of the men, AGIs, and materiel have reached their three targets.” Said Alvin.

7:30 PM EST

The men and materiel reached their target destinations. The perimeters surrounding the respective sites had long been established and a logistics chain of military manpower was in place. At the sites, large tunnel boring machines had made their way to the zero point energy force fields of the Reptilians. Alvin and Joseph were in a conference room at The Peak when Councillor Rittenbacher informed them of the arrival of the troops and materiel.

“Men, the troops, AIs, and apcs have arrived at their three target locations. You will be notified live of the events as they occur.” Said Councillor Rittenbacher on a holographic screen in the conference room.

Alvin turned off the screen and raced to the room containing the omnidirectional treadmills. The treadmills were 30 square feet in area. A virtual reality headset had been fabricated for both Alvin and Joseph to give them full vision of the battle against the Reptillians. This headset had a 230 degree field of view and 3000 pixel per inch resolution allowing for optimal vision in virtual and augmented reality. They both donned haptic feedback gloves which would allow them to touch and feel objects in their surrogate bodies.

Alvin and Joseph brought up a program on their smart utility devices on their wrists. They enabled a connection to the surrogates. The nanobots in their heads activated the 1 to 1 neuronal connections. The surrogates came to life. In the back of the military convoy, their bodies were stored in boxes which had been separated from the APCs. All around the perimeters logistics trains of men and women were readying for combat.

An extra 1,000,000 troops were stationed at the boring sites just in case the initial invasion had failed. Alvin and Joseph commanding their surrogates stealthily lifted the lids off their boxes. In the boxes was a set of two laser pulse rifles. They armed themselves with the rifles. The boxes were stored in a large makeshift facility half a mile away from the boring zones. Down a long hallway adjacent rooms had thousands of military service members and conscripted civilians. Alvin and Joseph were walking on their treadmills when a lieutenant in the UEF army stopped them.

“Why aren't you men in the APCs yet? You're part of the elite infantry squads. Have you been dilly dallying all goddamn day? If you don't get your asses to the boring zones entry sites I'll have your asses court martialed!” Said the colonel.

“Yes sir, will do.” Said Alvin’s surrogate.

The colonel read the nametags on the uniforms of the soldiers.

“Stockton and Willis. What the hell do you two think you are doing? You both are armed with laser pulse rifles but you don't have on any vortex crystal armor! How do you think you're going to survive against the Reptilians if you don't have any armor! Head down to the armory first and double time it! I swear, if General Maddox chews out my ass or has me court martialed I'll throw you under the bus! You hear me maggots? Now, get moving!” Screamed the colonel.

Alvin and Joseph's surrogates ran down the corridor to the armory. The building was made of cold dense steel and was spartan in nature. The bare minimum was created in a matter of hours to temporarily house the invading army and their equipment. In the armory, two sergeants were stationed at the door and a lieutenant was at the far end of the room with a digital tablet taking inventory of the armor and weapons being handed out. There was a long line of one hundred men-- the last few backup conscripts which were getting their weapons and gear. A sergeant at the door ran towards the lieutenant at the back of the room and informed them of Alvin and Joseph's surrogates.

“Stockton! Willis! Get your asses down here over to the lieutenant! You're fucking late!” Screamed the sergeant.

Alvin and Joseph ran on their treadmills down towards the lieutenant.

“This is fucking incredible. I've never seen elite infantry this derelict from duty before. You better hope your asses don't get court martialed! You're the last ones getting gear, the APCs are going to leave within twenty minutes!” Exasperated the lieutenant.

In front of Stockton and Willis was a four hundred foot long rotating rack-array of gear and laser pulse rifles. The lieutenant looked down at his tablet and programmed nanobots to inspect and measure Stockton and Willis. Their height, weight and body length, width and depth were measured. The rack-array spun 90 degrees and down the line came two suits of vortex crystal armor. The armor was pristine and had a shimmering glow.

Deep in the femto-structure of the suits were cores with tiny toroidal vortices. These toroidal vortices were made up in structure of lower energy electrons which when shot at, absorbed the energy from a pulsed laser or other projectile. The armor was good for a sufficient number of shots, around 5 consecutive shots before it needed to recharge the vortices. The energy absorbed by the vortices would be dissipated into heat until the vortices could recharge and form their lower energy structures to take more damage. Stockton and Willis donned their armor. On top of their heads was a vortex crystal helmet with a clear visor. On their feet, vortex crystal boots.

“Now both of you report to the infantry convoy. They're still taking out conscripts and we will have more vehicles moving back and forth in case everything goes to hell. If you do your job right and kill those alien fuckers we won't need any of these poor saps. Get a move on!” Said the lieutenant.

Stockton and Willis left the armory and went into an adjacent room which led outside. Out front of the facility complex was a fleet of trucks moving soldiers and conscripts to the staging ground. They both got into the back of one the military trucks and a conscript talked to them.

“What the hell? What are two elite infantrymen like you still doing at the facility? The elite troops were just transported to the staging ground about fifteen minutes ago. Guess we got some stragglers then.” Said the conscript.

“Yeah, I guess so.” Said Stockton.

“I can't believe the Reptilians had a base near my hometown of Cleveland. They must be using Lake Michigan as a source of clean fresh water. They probably have been doing that for thousands of years. Who knows really.” Said the conscript.

Hoisted by straps their treadmills, Alvin and Joseph sat down for the ride to the staging ground. The half mile journey to the staging ground was quick, it took roughly ten minutes for the convoy to get there. At the staging ground, a large diagonal elevator had been built to send down APCs and auxiliary troops. A captain ran to the back of the truck where Stockton and Willis, Alvin and Joseph's surrogates, were.

“Alright you maggots, get the hell off the truck! We're invading in ten minutes!” Yelled the captain.

Behind the vortex crystal armor, the captain saw the insignia of the elite squad Stockton and Willis belonged to.

“Aw shit, we got two stragglers. What a coincidence, we were missing two men from one of the APCs since the elite troops arrived. You two, Stockton, Willis, double time it to the elevator, they've been waiting for you!” Yelled the Captain.

Stockton and Willis jumped out of the truck and ran to the diagonal elevator. Waiting there was a set of 10 APCs, the last set which were heading down into the Reptilian base. One of the APCs was still open, with crew members waiting. Inside was Invictus, two elite infantrymen and enough space for Stockton and Willis. They both climbed in and pivoted shut the door. Invictus had been informed of Alvin and Joseph's plan. He told the infantry commanders that two elite soldiers were missing and would be arriving shortly. The elevator descended down into the caverns of the Reptilians. Underneath the surface was a giant subterranean cavern.

Fifteen miles underground, its ceiling was 6000 feet high. At the bottom of the shaft was a giant zero point energy force field, purple in color. A ring of APCs were stationed around this Reptilian base. The APCs were maneuvered from this elevator shaft into an enclosure around the subterranean city. 1665 APCs formed the circumference of the enclosure. In Stockton and Willis's APC, General Maddox came up on a holographic screen.

“Troops and androids, we are ready to begin the invasion. We don't know what lies beyond this zero point energy force field so be prepared for anything. If you die today, know you have died for a good cause--the saving of humanity. Godspeed and take out as many of those alien scum as you can.”

The APCs in unison permeated the zero point energy force field effortlessly. All of the matter glided through the force field and teleported onto the other side. Waiting for the troops were fortified positions of Reptilians behind machine gun nests. The hatches to the APCs opened and the troops flooded out.

Laser pulses bombarded the APCs and severely damaged them. Invictus from his hand unleashed a nanobot swarm that devoured two machine gun nests. Alvin aimed Stockton's rifle and fired upon an embankment 900 feet away from the APCs. Elite troops and AIs were taking hits to their vortex crystal armor left and right. In the initial deployment, a few soldiers and AIs overcharged their suits and were vaporized by laser pulse projectiles.

Joseph, aiming Willis's rifle, charged his laser pulse rifle and took out a machine gun nest of five Reptilians. Invictus ran behind his APC and recalled his nanobot swarm. He programmed the swarm to find the source of the zero point energy field's power. Within seconds the swarm reached a power grid that spanned across the subterranean city. The field was disabled as Invictus hacked into it.

Thousands of conscripts and infantrymen swarmed across the APC perimeter that was once behind the force field. The androids from each APC targeted and hit their Reptilian enemies with perfect accuracy. After the initial five minute skirmish, urban combat had begun. The Reptilian base under Cleveland was a massive labyrinthian city. Its buildings were made of stone and thousands of feet high.

Invictus had hacked into the Reptilians's communication channels and power grid. At the center of the massive labyrinthian city was the leader's palace. Invictus informed the invading troops by prompting a message on their smart utility devices on their wrists. A holographic message popped up for the soldiers from their wrists and voice audio streamed into their crystal vortex helmets.

“THE CITY IS SWARMING WITH COMBATANTS.

AT THE CENTER IS THE LOCAL REPTILIAN LEADER'S PALACE.

UPLOADING UPDATED MAP INFORMATION NOW.”

In real time, every soldier in the underground cavern had received updated map information and the position of enemy troops. The AIs in each squad guided the troops and informed them of enemies around every corner. The circumference of the troops was closing in and choking Reptilian resistance. Stockton and Willis's squad along with hundreds of conscripts were fighting house by house to eliminate Reptilian resistance. Reptilian women and children were slaughtered and no prisoners were taken.

From the city center the Reptilian emperor broadcasted a message which was deciphered by Invictus.

“All those who live here will die here and must fight for their lives. Reptilians, take arms against the Invaders and take no prisoners. Once we defeat our enemies we shall make great sacrifices to the Sky God Ka’laba! Fight for your lives!”

Hundreds of thousands of Reptilians mobilized across the city and positioned themselves on rooftops, in windows and around the corners of buildings. Thousands of conscripts vaporized from high energy projectile weapons while the elite human and android squads struggled to gain a foothold in the city. The androids, while few in number, proved to be the most effective killing machines. Stockton and Willis, guided by Alvin and Joseph, proved to be amateurish in killing aliens. In thirty minutes, the battle swung in the Reptilians’s favor.

Their true number came to be known as the troops went deeper into the city. Millions of Reptilians swarmed the streets supporting their military forces. Another message was broadcasted from the Reptilian leader.

“The invaders are perishing! Fight for your home and we will repel them! Fight onward to victory! ”

Councillor Rittenbacher received news from the three underground sites across the planet. General Maddox came up on the panoramic holographic screen at the Pentagon’s situation room.

“We severely underestimated the amount of Reptilian resistance Councillor. We need to pull back our troops or we will face total annihilation.” Said General Maddox.

Rittenbacher, sitting at a desk with analysts and Solis, became infuriated and slammed his fists against the table.

“You're meaning to tell me the world's best troops, a fucking elite army of androids, soldiers and millions of conscripts can't take out a few million Reptilians?” Screamed Rittenbacher.

“We’re trying our best Councilor, we just can't take on so many targets at once. Even the androids are being overwhelmed with the amount of resistance coming from the Reptilians. Nanobot swarms are devouring our androids and men as well. Sir, I recommend we make a hasty retreat and order three underground nuclear strikes across the three sites.” Said General Maddox.

Rittenbacher had been prepared to resort to using nuclear weapons. At each of the three staging grounds, 10 100 kiloton nuclear bombs and 5 neutron bombs were armed and ready to go.

“I'm authorizing the retreat of the elite troops and the AIs. I don't care if the conscripts die, as far as I'm concerned they're just collateral damage. I will be notifying the other generals of my decision.” Said Rittenbacher.

“Understood sir. I'll make sure the orders are sent down the chain of command and executed.” Said Maddox.

Meanwhile, two miles within the subterranean city, casualties were mounting. Hordes of Reptilian warriors, armed citizenry, women and children flooded into the gun sights of the invading army. One hundred thousand Reptilians had been killed compared to the 40% of the UEF forces and conscripts. A message was sent to the elite forces and androids's smart utility devices--

"We are retreating and nuking the cities. Double time it to the elevator and make sure you don't die!" Said General Maddox

The forces quickly performed retreating maneuvers providing covering fire for retreating squads. Conscripts caught in hand to hand combat with Reptilians and on the city streets were now stuck in the city. Some of the conscripts, around five thousand saw the retreating maneuvers and broke in morale. They started running for their lives while other conscripts were encircled and fighting to the death. In the other areas of the enclosure not immediately next to the diagonal elevator, the elite squads and androids were doomed. Willis was struck five times and Joseph's surrogate vaporized immediately.

"God damnit!" Yelled Joseph.

He threw off his virtual reality headset and unlatched himself from his harness. He deactivated the Omni directional treadmill and took a seat at a nearby table. At the table, he brought up his smart utility device and deactivated the nanobot neuronal net--in reality this was just a formality, since the neural connection to the surrogate been destroyed under the intense heat of the collapse of the vortex crystals. All that was left to deactivate were the nanobots in his head.

"It's all up to you Alvin. You've gotta survive and get out of there to see how this ends." Said Joseph.

Alvin was too concentrated on escaping the Reptilian city. He was running hard on the treadmill and shooting frantically at ambushing Reptilians. Invictus sent another nanobot swarm to create a ditch behind their tracks. The pursuing Reptilians fell in the ditch but some managed to leap over the ditch. Alvin was hit twice. His vortex crystals spent a minute recharging and he was good to go again. Hundreds of conscripts were mowed down by the pursuing Reptilians.

Finally, they reached the diagonal elevator. Invictus summoned his nanobot swarm to form a stone wall from the nearby buildings and the city's roads. At this point, 3 squad members in Stockton's squad were left: him, Invictus and one elite infantryman. At the elevator floor two thousand conscripts were left. They formed a semi circle of troops providing covering fire until the elevator arrived. Coming down the elevator shaft was a 100 kiloton bomb and five neutron bombs mounted on rockets.

At every APC landing zone elevator, troops were awaiting for evac. 100 kiloton bombs and neutron bombs were awaiting at each site. The infantry, androids and conscripts were machine gunning down hordes of oncoming Reptilians when the elevators finally arrived. The soldiers and conscripts boarded the elevator while the bombs flew towards the center of the city. Invictus

overrode the elevators speed controls and forced it to accelerate them up the shaft. The elevator was near breaking point as the bombs flew towards the center of the city.

The bombs reached their target destination and exploded. A huge fireball and hundreds of billions of doses of radiation rode a pressure wave through the labyrinthian city. Stockton, the troops, Invictus and the conscripts finally reached ground level. They sprinted from the already evacuated elevator site as a huge fireball burst out of the elevator shaft. A thousand feet away, a semicircle perimeter of soldiers in machine gun nests trained their gun sights on the elevator.

“Don't shoot! We're not Reptilians!” Yelled Stockton.

The infantry and conscripts waited, guns aimed, for a few minutes as the fires bellowed out of the elevator shaft.

“Yes, we did it! We defeated the Reptilians!” Yelled Stockton as he raced towards the machine gun nest perimeter.

General Maddox came over the staging ground loudspeaker.

“Don't let down your guard yet, those bastards are still alive!”

The soldiers aimed down their sights and charged their laser pulse rifles. Out of the elevator shaft crawled a Reptilian, on fire. Its skin had burnt off and it was wailing in pain. One hundred thousand rifles fired and obliterated the Reptilian.

Ten more Reptilians came up from the shaft. One hundred thousand more shots. 100 hundred Reptilians came up from the shaft again. One hundred thousand more shots. Suddenly, hundreds of thousands of Reptilians crawled out of the shaft using their claws. On their backs they were strapped with laser pulse rifles.

“Don't fucking stop firing! Fire!” Yelled General Maddox

The Reptilian warriors were gunned down as they charged the machine gun nests. Flaming and highly radioactive, these were the last of the Reptilian troops to survive. None survived the barrage of laser pulses. The troops aimed down their sights waiting for a confirmation that all hostiles were eliminated. A colonel ordered a squad to send a nanobot swarm down the elevator shaft. Within minutes the entire city had been scanned and it was saturated with immense radiation. Fires burnt in the labyrinthian city and most of the buildings had been destroyed. Colonel Maddox alerted the troops to stand down around the elevator shaft. His voice came on over the staging ground intercom.

“You did it boys, the war against the Reptilians has been won.”

Alvin's surrogate took off his helmet. He pointed his laser pulse rifle to his head and pulled the trigger. Alvin took off his virtual reality helmet and disengaged his treadmill straps. He

deactivated the nanobot neural net and saw Joseph in the corner raise a glass of champagne to him.

“We did it Alvin. The Reptilians are gone, Rittenbacher just came over on the holographic screen and announced that all three sites were completely annihilated.”

Alvin stepped off the treadmill and had a drink with Joseph.

“I’ll celebrate tonight but we really shouldn’t Joseph. The war against the Annunaki isn’t over yet. We still have a lot of work to do.” Alvin said.

Councillor Rittenbacher came back on the holographic screen in the room.

“Alvin, Joseph. I saw everything you did. Are you fucking kidding me? Who gave you the authorization to do any of that? You could have been killed!” Yelled Rittenbacher.

“You’re just behind the times Rittenbacher, there was no way we would have died using the neural nets. Those bodies were just surrogates, we can’t die if they die.” Said Alvin.

“I guess what’s done is done and there’s no changing that. The war with the Reptilians is over, but the war effort against the Annunaki is far from over. We still need you two to be in top shape to head Singularitarian’s mass production capacities.” Said Rittenbacher.

“Look Councillor, we had an exhausting day today. We’re going to take a break and relax for tonight. We’ll contact you tomorrow morning.” Said Alvin

“Rest gentlemen, you deserve it.” Said Rittenbacher

Rittenbacher disconnected from the conference feed and the holographic screen powered down. One drink quickly became two and then three. Alvin and Joseph became visibly tipsy.

“Say Alvin, why don’t we celebrate in your apartment? It’ll be a chalcant affair, just you me and Lonna.” Said Joseph

Alvin was happy from the booze and accepted the invitation to chat and relax with Joseph. They went up to Alvin’s penthouse and sat down in the living room. There, Lonna was waiting. Alvin gave her a kiss and hugged her.

“Congratulations Alvin, the Reptilians are dead! We did it, well, we took out one of the alien races at least.” Said Lonna.

Lonna never wore makeup. Alvin admired her for her natural beauty and rebuked her when she wasted her time wearing makeup. Out on the streets of Manhattan, the city was lit up from festivities. The martial law imposed curfew had been alleviated, for the time being. Alvin decided that tonight should be a special night. He went into his bedroom and got out a lockbox. In the lockbox was two ounces of potent high grade cannabis. This post singularity cannabis was

different however and not for the average new comer to marijuana. It was especially designed to upregulate cannabinoid receptors in the brain with every hit. Every hit got the user higher and higher, until the maximum amount of receptors could be filled in the brain and body. Alvin took out a small pipe and packed it full of cannabis.

He took a large hit. Within a minute, he was noticeably stoned. Thoughts raced in his head. Another hit and he got higher. One final hit and he was as high as the cannabis could let him be, or so he thought. He passed around the pipe to Lonna and Joseph.

At this point he was drunk and high. In his mind however, Alvin thought of the millions of conscripts that died today and the genocide of a peaceful race of aliens. He wondered if the entire war effort was a waste and that he was heading humanity down the wrong course. This is why he usually didn't smoke pot. It was too much introspection, too much psychedelia. Alvin's vision turned into a chromatic tunnel of vibrating colors and visual hallucinations.

In his field of view he saw Reptilians and humans dying, a child blowing bubbles and sentient androids talking to one another. Maybe he shouldn't have smoked so much he thought.

“Man, I'm fucking stoned.” Said Joseph.

“Tell me about it. When I was a kid we never had anything like this stuff. The singularity exponentiated everything. Hehe.” Said Lonna.

Lonna bursted out laughing, Alvin and Joseph followed instinctively. The three sat there and chatted while high for two hours. Joseph decided that he was getting tired and retreated to his apartment in the lower levels under Alvin's. Alvin and Lonna headed to the bedroom. They both took two more hits of cannabis and undressed. Lonna touched Alvin's arm and shivers ran down his spine. He was still very high and would be for a few hours. Every sensation was magnified a thousand times over and he felt as if he was in ecstasy. They both got into bed and had vigorous sex.

They both had the best feeling orgasms from the high potency cannabis. The afterglow of the sex held strong before they fell asleep. The last thought in Alvin's mind for the night was of the millions of families that would be suffering tomorrow when they heard the news that their loved ones perished in the fighting.

Chapter 3: Revolutions

June 15th, 2032

In the months following the victory against the Reptillians, Earth was on a full mass production schedule for the war against the Annunaki. The 2,000,000 pounds of dark matter that was lost in the nuclear bombing of the Reptilian bases was replaced by an overabundance in dark matter. Jack Briggs had successfully managed to track and steal some of the new shipments of dark matter for his own pirate spaceship. Although millions of people found work in the nationalized industries of the United Earth Federation, discontent grew amongst the masses. Billions of people were underpaid, overworked and the levels of economic inequality grew massively. Alvin was an outlier to the other trillionaires and billionaires; most of his wealth laid not squandered on frivolities but was invested in Singularitarian. He lived a spartan lifestyle but was very inclined towards augmenting it with technologies. The other political and economic elite were a different matter. Most of the wealthy in the world had bought up tremendous amounts of land and material goods. Prices skyrocketed in times of uncertainty as the elite hoarded as much material and land capital as they could.

Immortality was available for all through whole body gene therapies and whole scale nanobot infusions. Anyone who worked for a wage could purchase these nanobots and undergo these therapies cheaply. Biological senescence had been reversed and although one's age would increase, their biological age and looks had reverted to when they were twenty two years old. The masses were discontent with working for such low wages in perpetuity with the possibility of embodied robots taking their jobs for no wages whatsoever.

Automation had already destroyed and streamlined entire industries. Only a few lines of work still remained for those entering the workforce. Many worked remedial service sector jobs and the rest higher paying engineering and scientific jobs. This led to a three tiered world economy: the lowest level of the proletariat, the mid level technocrats of the bourgeoisie and the highest level uber-rich elites. Fomenting in underground movements were talks of a revolution of the proletariat and the poorer technocrats.

The Global People's Front, a Marxist-Leninist party that formed in the late 2020s in America, gained world prominence. They argued that under the new totalitarian regime of the United Earth Federation, there was economic impetus for a worldwide communist government. They rallied against the inequities of the capitalist system and influenced large swaths of the working class population of the world. Elections were postponed due to the imposition of martial law and this became a point of contention for the Global People's Front. The chairman of the party, Heinrich Boltz, quickly became a target of suspicion by the UEF government.

Heinrich was a short stocky man, he had auburn hair and deep sunken in eyes. His eyes were blue and he had a medium length, combed beard. He was out of shape and a little overweight. He reminded many of his followers of Lenin himself and appeared nothing like the ideal image of a communist soldier. Other political factions during this time came to power and opposed the communists bitterly.

The Transhumanist Party was a post scarcity economy faction. Their chairman, Jacob Malovitz, argued that machines and humans should unite to expand across the galaxy. He was 6 foot, had

black hair, a thin nose and brown eyes. He was white as well. His party came from the United States. They supported the capitalist system but wanted to instate a universal basic income and to have sentient embodied AIs join the workforce. These androids would be distributed to each family and become a source of income as each android competed against one another in the economy to create a better future.

The Return Party was a party of luddites who condemned the rise of sentient AIs and the robotization of the world of economy. This party was focused mainly on politics in the United States. They argued for complete deindustrialization and a return to 20th century modes of production and economy. Their chairman, Patricia Roberts was an old woman. She had black hair and was white, she was frail from old age. She never underwent immortality medical treatments and made certain that she would die from senescence or other natural causes.

The only legitimate and sovereign faction was the federated union of states of the United Earth Federation. Amongst political circles, supporters of the junta UEF were called the loyalists. The loyalists supported the nationalized economic sectors of the post-singularity capitalist economy led by a unified world military. Their leader, Councilor Mark Rittenbacher, was the official leader of the planet and part of the only official political party of the UEF state, named the Federation.

Alvin considered himself a part of the United Earth Federation but was not in favor of any particular cause. He disliked politics but thought of the moral ramifications of the life he lived. Being the person who brought mankind into the singularity, Alvin often thought about the millions of displaced workers that AI had removed from their jobs. He thought about the power of the global elites and the super rich. He would soon come to find out that even as the world's most powerful man, the common people would decide his fate as well as the destiny of mankind.

By November of 2032, the Global People's Front had radicalized hundreds of millions of youth and disadvantaged proletariat. In their secret meetings, Boltz had disseminated down the party hierarchy that open resistance must be their new goal and target. Their aim was to take by force the domain of the United Earth Federation. The three other factions would provide stiff resistance however. They all allied against the Communists and pooled together their resources to make an army of the bourgeoisie.

Heinrich Boltz had gone into hiding and a revolution was fully underway by mid November. Across the planet in every major city the proletariat rose up against their capitalist overlords. Manufactories, mining industries and the merchant fleets were all affected. The poorer states in the Federation had succumbed to full secession from the United Earth Federation and became communist states. In hundreds of countries across the world the managerial classes were abolished and direct ownership of the means of production established amongst the workers.

The Transhumanist faction resorted to modifying their bodies and becoming cyborgs. They shared a hivemind which they could access at will and created a new neural network internet called the ultranet. This network combined the human processing power of individual organic neurons which ran at a frequency of about ten hertz with clusters of artificial neurons which ran at speeds of five gigahertz. These artificial and organic neurons interfaced with a worldwide

network of super sentient AIs providing instantaneous access to information and processing power. The major cities that had not succumbed to communism became contested ground for the four factions.

The Return Party and The Federation loyalists bitterly disagreed with the Transhumanist Party's decision to form a hivemind of cyborgs. They were in clear violation of the Transhumanist Protection Act established in 2030 which forbade extreme cybernetic augmentation. The Transhumanists argued that the Federation's acceptance of embodied AIs and the creation of sentient non embodied AIs violated this act as well. By November 16th 2032, Manhattan had degraded to block by block urban warfare and the city had been deserted. Only Singularitarian's headquarters, government outposts and vital technological companies owned by the Federation had occupied the city.

Federation military units, bands of cyborgs, communists and luddite Return members roamed the streets fighting for territory. The west side of Manhattan was claimed by the communists and the east by the Federation and its allies. The Peak was in the middle of downtown Manhattan, a no man's land that was contested day by day. Alvin and his employees were running out of supplies and could only manufacture so much food and generate power for so long. Alvin was at his breaking point with his life on the line, along with his employees at The Peak. He had been ordered to stay at The Peak or face imprisonment under the Federation's command.

Alvin thought that this command was a strict and harsh one. News barely reached him from Rittenbacher and in the past months during the revolution, all economic activity had ceased. He found it strange that Rittenbacher wanted him to stay at The Peak, in the middle of a warzone. Alvin thought of the lives of his employees and how they had nowhere to go. He wasn't going to abandon them now.

November 16th, 2032 12:00 pm EST

In a conference room at The Peak, Alvin contacted Rittenbacher, desperate for Federation military relief.

Rittenbacher's face appeared on a dimly lit holographic screen, which was conserving energy.

"Councillor, we can't hold out at The Peak any longer. The communists are gaining ground--"

Outside, a band of communists triangulated Alvin's position and hit a conference office window with a rocket propelled grenade. The windows of the conference room blew out and Alvin took cover under the large conference table in the room. Joseph ran into the conference room, grabbed Alvin and dragged him out into the hallway.

"Alvin, we don't have time. You need to arm yourself and get into some vortex crystal armor. Word is that Heinrich Boltz is outside coming to take you prisoner." Said Joseph.

A group of Return partisans flooded the conference room and laid down suppressing fire until they could target the shooter with the rocket launcher. Out on the street, the communists were

dressed in plain clothes and had a mix of machine guns and laser pulse rifles. Heinrich Boltz was in the back of the convoy directing the guerillas as they faced two fronts of attack: the only squad of available Federation forces nearby in front of them and the employees of Singularitarian shooting down at them.

In the building were eight squads of Federation soldiers in reserve for the day the communists would attack the building. Two squads had taken shelter in the lower floors and were shooting at the communists down below. The Peak's lobby doors were reinforced shut but the communists came prepared. In their 20,000 man horde they came with a large truck rigged with explosives. A daft communist drove up to the lobby entrance and ran as fast as he could away from the truck.

From a block down the street, Heinrich set off the explosives and the rotating lobby door blew wide apart. Shrapnel went flying and scared employees fled to the upper levels of The Peak. Down in the lobby, five of the squads were waiting along with a group of cyborgs. The cyborgs unleashed nanobot swarms to immediately disintegrate some of the communists but the swarms could only process so many men before the cyborgs would become overwhelmed. Around the corners of the lobby the squads positioned and aimed their laser pulse rifles at the marauding communists. The expert marksmen took down a few communists but it wasn't enough to stop them from pouring through the former barricade and the windows of the lobby.

Over a megaphone from the street below, Heinrich reached out to Alvin.

"Greetings comrade, I knew this day would come! Let me make something clear, I'm only going to offer this to you once so you better make sure you listen up. You can surrender now and join the communists or we'll kill everyone inside that building until we capture you alive."

Heinrich immediately put down his megaphone at the back of the convoy and ordered his troops into The Peak. He was smoking on a fine cuban cigar and dressed in communist military attire. He had a beret with one red star on it and a black uniform. On his back he had a laser pulse rifle. Bursting through the lobby windows and the blown in door, the forces overwhelmed the squads in the lobby.

They killed everyone on the lobby floor and proceeded to man the stairs and elevators. Heinrich setup in the lobby with skilled hackers to determine if any remaining Federation squads were left and Alvin's location in the building. Heinrich took a comfortable chair from the back of the lobby and sat down. Sitting in a circle around him, his engineers setup a holographic screen and base station with antennas broadcasting into the building. Heinrich puffed his cigar.

"Get me Reed quickly. The building is swarming with soldiers ready to kill." Heinrich said.

The engineers scanned the building and on the holographic screen came up the infrared signatures of Alvin, Joseph and hundreds of assistants on the fortieth floor.

"Hack the nearby screens and get me to Reed now!" Said Heinrich

One of the engineers pulled out a tablet and hacked into the room's holographic screens. Alvin and Joseph were fully armed to the teeth and the employees were fortified behind cubicles with laser pulse rifles.

Heinrich's face came up on the screen behind Alvin.

“Hey Alvin, turn around. It's me, Heinrich Boltz.”

Alvin turned around and thoughts raced in his mind. Would I die here he thought? Is this the end of Singularitarian?

“Boltz what the fuck do you want from me? You've already killed hundreds of my employees and many innocent people!” Said Alvin.

Heinrich took another puff from his cigar and let out the wispy smoke.

“I'm making you an offer to join the revolution. My men are coming up the stairs and elevators as we speak right now. Will you join us or do we have to capture you?” Said Heinrich.

Alvin looked outside and saw the thousands of communists swarming the block. To him, it was clear there was no going back if he chose to fight for the communists.

“I surrender Heinrich. Don't kill any more of my people. We will stand down.” Said Alvin.

Heinrich spoke into a microphone in his shirt.

“Men! Stop killing people inside the building. They have surrendered. We'll take them alive.”

The guerillas reached the fortieth floor and detained the employees of Singularitarian. Alvin and Joseph were brought down to the lobby where outside, thousands of communists were establishing a base of operations to take over the rest of the city. Lonna was upstairs in the penthouse. Once she had saw the commotion, she hid and barricaded the foyer elevator. Heinrich was still puffing on his cigar and speaking to subordinates.

“Comandante Boltz, we have Alvin and Joseph here.” Said one of the guerillas.

Heinrich turned around and shook Alvin's hand.

“I've been waiting for this moment for years Alvin, to finally meet the man who brought us into the technological singularity. Without you this revolution would have never been possible. I've got great plans for you once this is all over.”

“Can you tell your thugs to let go of me? I'm not going to fight you or anyone else here.” Said Alvin.

“Ah yes, men, let go of Alvin and Joseph. They're cooperating with us so we shouldn't treat them so poorly.

I don't know if you've been keeping up to date on the news Alvin but the entire world has joined the Global People's Front. Your Federation has abandoned you and isolated themselves in Europe. We have resistance fighters and partisans working on that situation but they are putting up fierce resistance to the revolution.” Said Heinrich.

“What exactly do you want from me Heinrich? Your revolution has already taken over many of the manufactories we formerly owned and stolen many of our technologies.” Said Alvin.

“We need you and Joseph as figureheads for the new communist state. The populace will join our cause if they know you have joined us Alvin. I must mention however, all of your assets will be seized and redistributed under the new communist government. You'll be treated like everyone else, which is not a bad proposition I might say. Wouldn't you like a 4,000 square foot house and a personal android to assist you and work for you? The communist government is offering that and much more, at the cost of the dismemberment of the bourgeoisie, “ said Heinrich.

“I don't believe any of it. Communism never worked before and I doubt it will work now. What choice do I have though? It's either your fantasy or death.” Said Alvin.

“Yeah I agree, this sounds like a total load of bullshit. Don't the bourgeoisie deserve what they earned?” Butted in Joseph.

Heinrich puffed his cigar and scratched his head.

“Look gentlemen I'm really not going to delve into dialectical materialism and the whole spiel now. With the advances of the technological singularity, Marx's dreams of a worldwide technological proletarian state can be realized. All that's left to be done is to cut off the serpent's head of the resistance, namely being Councillor Rittenbacher,” Said Heinrich.

“What will my new position be in the Global People's Front?” asked Alvin.

“The party's positions have not been established yet. We are planning on modelling our government after the Soviets. We will establish a Secretariat and Political Bureau that will legislate globally. If we succeed, which I highly doubt that we will not, I am promoting you to Chairman of the Secretariat. Joseph will also receive a similar position, probably Technical Secretary.” Said Heinrich.

“Don't you think it's ironic that you're recruiting members of the bourgeoisie to the highest leadership positions in your new government?” Said Joseph.

“Not necessarily. I believe in the proletarian cause but we can't have imbeciles running the government. Besides, considering that we've passed the singularity it's not long until this entire thing becomes a formality. The revolution had to occur, it was the destiny of mankind. The party

sees a future where mankind will delegate all of its work to sentient androids, but currently requires human leadership to provide equity for all,” said Heinrich.

“What about my employees, what is going to happen to them?” Asked Alvin.

“Your employees? They own Singularitarian now. We all own Singularitarian. Its resources shall be used by the new government to combat the Annunaki and for the betterment of society, not the enrichment of capitalists.” Said Heinrich.

“So what do you want me to do exactly if I can't issue orders to the corporate structure I maintained at Singularitarian?” Asked Alvin.

“Like I said Alvin, you'll be dealing with apparatus of government now. I delegate to you as chairman the responsibility of overseeing the world's productive capacity through the politics of the party. I must say however, you do owe me one last favor before you receive any of the things I have promised you.” Said Heinrich.

“Yeah, what's that Heinrich?” Asked Alvin.

“Millions of revolutionaries have died for the cause Alvin, mostly due to your influence in The Federation. Your alliance with The Federation has led to partisan and military resistance. Although you never considered yourself a man of politics, your complacency led to that alliance. What I ask of you is to fight for the revolution.” Said Heinrich.

“Like a soldier? What are you expecting me to do, kill Councillor Rittenbacher myself?” Asked Alvin.

“Precisely. I want you to join me with my comrades in the assault on the Federation's last bastion, London.” Said Heinrich.

Heinrich took another puff of his cigar and pulled out his smartphone to show Alvin what he was talking about.

“Despite what you have been told, Councillor Rittenbacher is not at the White House or at the Pentagon. In September, with the news of the mass uprisings, he fled to London. The rest of the Federation council, the world's elites and the last strands of the Federation military have made the British Isles their final base of operations. Our nanobot probes and human spies have told us that the former United Kingdom is heavily fortified. They have injected all of their capital in the defense of the isles.” Said Heinrich.

On his phone, images of automated machine gun turret embankments filled the English coasts and the Cliffs of Dover. Next to these machine gun embankments were rows of automated anti aircraft guns. Heinrich flicked his finger to the next set of images. It was an image of London from a communist spy. Cyborgs, androids and civilians were heavily armed and patrolling London's streets.

Alvin's eyes widened and he thought Heinrich was insane.

“What about the rest of Europe, Heinrich, is it just as fortified?” asked Alvin.

“Not quite. I did say Europe was providing intense resistance, but the only major Federation outpost is Britain. What we are expecting is urban combat once we land in France and perhaps a month or two of quashing partisan resistance. From there we will establish a base of operations to invade England.” Said Heinrich.

Heinrich took one last puff of his cigar and threw it to the ground. He stepped on it and its embers faded into the rubble.

The horde of communists secured The Peak and embedded the employees of Singularitarian into their ranks. Common folk fraternized with the technocrats in a new alliance, in the final phase of the communist revolution. Throughout the day, using The Peak as a base of operations between their Western territories and the Federation controlled East, the mob of communists wiped out the remaining resistance cells in Manhattan. By nightfall, forty thousand commoners died and Manhattan became part of the new communist bloc of the Americas.

In the coming months, the revolutionary party had filled the world with communist fervor. Statues of Heinrich were erected across the world as the revolution gained hold. Posters, billboards and other advertisements for capitalist products were torn down. Now the face of Heinrich Boltz occupied these places along with communist propaganda. Goose stepping soldiers, parades of tanks and nuclear missiles filled the screens of cities worldwide. The United Earth Federation's war effort against the Reptilians and Anunnaki across the globe had transformed into the revolutionary efforts of the masses.

Europe had come under siege. In Great Britain, thirty million Federation military members were stationed along with half a billion bourgeoisie partisans. The cities were densely overcrowded with the rich capitalists who staked their wealth in the fascist United Earth Federation. Their thoughts were that they could defeat the billions of proletariat with radical technologies and unconventional tactics; their plans to retake territory were desperate. So far, their strategy had not worked. The United Earth Federation's venture with the Space Corps designed to defeat the Annunaki had been abandoned at hundreds of military sites across the globe. These vehicles were now in command of the communist forces and all the United Earth Federation had left was manpower, androids, transhuman cyborgs and Return partisans.

On February 1st, 2033, the invasion of northwestern Europe commenced. Hundreds of millions of conscripted proletarians had been transported to mainland France. Since November, the remaining UEF forces had retreated to Britain. The Space Corps acquired aircraft had been transported to sites along the English channel, the Netherlands and Denmark.

9:30 AM, GMT

Alvin found himself on the front lines, in Normandy, France along with Heinrich and Joseph. Snow fell heavily on the morning of the invasion. Along the borders of the English channel,

thousands of unmanned artillery pieces had been moved to the front lines. In the first salvo of the British invasion, the communists attempted to destroy the anti aircraft guns and artillery of the UEF. Both sides exchanged long range fire and lost significant numbers of unmanned AA guns and artillery. Ships carrying millions of communists were reserved behind the channel, in the Bay of Biscay, after the initial salvos of the invasion, to prevent unnecessary casualties.

The communist Space Corps's VTOL aircraft launched from their bases across the channel. They dropped billions of nanobots which coalesced into giant swarms, disintegrating the artillery and AA guns. Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph boarded a VTOL craft headed for the cliffs of Dover. Dover was their first target in taking over England. Other armies of proletariat would engage the southern countryside towns of England and meet in London.

At Dover, there was intense resistance and cohorts of UEF troops. The communists swarmed the town and engaged in heavy block by block street fighting. Dover was captured in two hours. With millions of communists swarming the cities only engaging thousands of UEF troops and partisan resistance, the communists conquered laterally from Dover to Portishead in a matter of four hours. The ashes of the resistance blew in the snow storm flurries that overtook England and France that morning.

Once a base of operations was established, hundreds of millions of communists barged across France into England. Red Communist flags with an Android face circumscribed in a star went up at the town halls of the southern English countryside. Nova, Solis and Invictus were stationed at Westminster Palace with Councillor Rittenbacher. At a critical meeting, the Councillor met with General Maddox, the council and the androids.

"Councillor, the communists are annihilating our defenses. I recommend that we offer a surrender in exchange for a lenient sentence. What is a few decades of prison if we are immortal?" Said a Councillor from the UEF.

Rittenbacher sneered at the Councillor.

"I will never surrender. These communists will torture us and kill us anyway. We will fight to the death to preserve the Federation." Said Rittenbacher

"Alvin Reed joined the communists Councillor Rittenbacher. This turn of events has influenced billions of communists to fight with him. Our nanobot probe scouts have shown us that as we speak, hundreds of millions of communists are flooding the southern English countryside. There's no way we can survive!" Exasperated the other Councillor.

General Maddox pointed his finger in the air and pulled his seat in to get closer to the conference table.

"Even with armed partisan resistance we are outnumbered 4:1. A large percentage of the world population is knocking on our doorstep. They will be in London within an hour or two, Councillor Rittenbacher. We have 100,000 android soldiers, a few million cyborgs and 500 million partisans along with the thirty million UEF soldiers that still remain across the country

side. I don't know what to do Councillor Rittenbacher, all hope seems lost.” Said General Maddox.

Councillor Rittenbacher put his head in his hands and groaned.

“We were trying to do the right thing. Now we’re all doomed. We just have to fight and take out as many of those damn communists as we can.”

The meeting ended promptly and the Councillor’s staff armed themselves. Machine gun and sniper nests were established on the roof of Westminster Palace. UEF troops rigged London bridge to explode. The citizens and UEF forces in the rest of the city were stranded. Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph marched on with the rest of the communist horde.

By 1:30 PM, the three had reached Croydon on the outskirts of London along with a few hundred thousand revolutionaries. Quickly the city was overcome and resistance eliminated. Another communist flag went up in the town center and another victory had been achieved by the communists. As news spread of the millions of communists readily taking English towns, some towns surrendered and defected to the communist side. The die hard loyalists of the UEF in London remained unwavering, they were not about to sacrifice the tremendous amount of capital they had invested in the Federation.

Councillor Rittenbacher ordered the destruction of the bridges that spanned over the river Thames which connected central London with the rest of the city. By 2:30 PM, Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph had reached Vauxhall Bridge. As the communists funneled into the entryway of the bridge, partisans picked them off and shot rocket propelled grenades into the masses of communists. Laser pulses obliterated hundreds of communists per second and the communists returned fire. The commanders of the communist forces quickly spread out throughout the city.

From the north side of the city, partisans and soldiers stationed in buildings shot at the communist forces. The hundreds of thousands of proletarians jumped into the river Thames, thousands drowned and others were vaporized by the massive amount of weaponry. From the south side of the river, troops raided high rise buildings and laid down suppressing fire against the Federation forces. More forces were barged across the English channel and a steady stream of communists came into the countryside.

The rest of England and Scotland was also being invaded from Denmark and Sweden. From the Bay of Biscay, millions of communists flooded into Ireland and Wales. Heinrich, Alvin and Joseph’s APC at Vauxhall Bridge was surrounded by thousands of communists blocking the street. In the river, cargo ships and civilian vessels were commandeered by the communists to shuttle troops across the Thames river. Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph reached a nearby dock to get access to a boat.

Once on the boat, hundreds of communists came on board and manned the deck of the boat. Halfway across the river, the boat was hit with two rocket propelled grenades and began listing as it filled with water. Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph along with the hundreds of communists jumped into the freezing river and began to swim across. Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph had new

upgraded sets of vortex crystal armor. This new armor was embedded with nanobots and a new version of vortex crystals that could regenerate hit pieces of armor much faster.

After five shots, the impacted vortex crystals would overload with energy and a hole would appear. Just as long as no shots hit these holes, within twenty seconds they would dissipate into a lower energy state and reform. But during that mean time, a well trained marksman could target the gaping holes and wound those who wore the armor. The nanobots circulated around the armor at high speeds to gain energy and heat up the soldiers in the cold river. Volleys of laser pulses and conventional bullets whizzed by as the hordes swam across the Thames.

Within twenty minutes, a fifth of the initial invading forces on the south side of the river had been killed. The three leaders reached the north side of Vauxhall Bridge road and proceeded eastward to Westminster Palace. The horde scoured the local buildings and killed any members of the resistance. Along the adjoining streets, partisans and UEF soldiers were firing at the invaders. The leaders directed the horde to Millbank road.

One fourth of the southern invading force infiltrated deeper into the center and west of London. Communist officers in the revolutionary army were ordered to take the royal family hostage and to execute them. Over the skies of London and England, the communist Space Corps engaged in dog fighting air combat with the remaining UEF air force. Planes were falling out of the sky and pilots parachuting down below into the city. These planes crashed into residential and commercial buildings across London. Massive fires began to engulf the city as the snow fell heavily.

On Millbank road, Alvin, Heinrich and Joseph led the guerrilla fighters towards Westminster Palace. Alvin thought of the horrors inflicted upon the city and questioned his whole purpose in being here. With every rocket, downed aircraft, and laser pulse barrage, collateral damage mounted. Who knows how many women and children had been killed or were going to die. Millions of communists were going to die tonight taking England and this bothered him as well. Heinrich looked at Alvin through Alvin's vortex crystal visor.

“What's the matter Alvin? Not enjoying the killing yet? This is what you were made for!”

Alvin didn't want to anger Heinrich. He considered him dangerous and crazy, but at this point he couldn't refuse to be on his side. Alvin faked a smile and held up his laser pulse rifle.

“I am loving the killing, I can't wait to do some more in the name of the revolution.” Alvin said.

Heinrich smiled and let out a hearty laugh. He put his rifle on his back and raised his fist in the air. He then said,

“That's my boy, Alvin! That is the spirit of the revolution, killing in the name of justice! For equality! Within a few minutes we'll have the head of Councillor Rittenbacher on a plate. Within a day, the revolution will be won!”

3:30 PM

After intense street by street fighting, a large force had gathered outside of Westminster Palace. The Federation machine gun nests and snipers nests on the roof of the building had been wiped out. Before Alvin, Joseph and Heinrich arrived, a squad of communists had fired rocket propelled grenades into the towers of the palace, killing the soldiers inside. The reason the communists still used outdated weaponry was because of its ubiquity. These rockets and older machine guns were stockpiled around the world. Manufactories would take weeks to fully arm the communists with the latest equipment. These older weapons were stolen globally and made up the majority of the invading forces gear.

At St. Stephen's entrance of Westminster Palace, guerrilla fighters set explosives to blow open the barricaded doors. Down the corridor in the central hall, Federation soldiers had set up sandbags and laser pulse machine guns. They opened fire on the communists that swarmed in and bodies quickly piled on top of one another. Alvin, Joseph and Heinrich were in the middle of the swarm. From the three other sides of the central hall, the UEF soldiers were overwhelmed by communists that came in through the other entrances.

From the east side of the Thames, thousands of communists from other raiding armies blew holes in the palace walls. As Alvin made his way into the palace, he was horrified by the damage the historical landmark was taking. Paintings had been vaporized, chunks of the busts of MPs and royalty had been scattered on the ground. Down the corridors of the palace, squads of Federation soldiers engaged in firefights with the communists. Alvin, Joseph and Heinrich overtook the Central Hall. From there, Heinrich issued commands to his guerilla officers.

"I want every court in the palace searched and cleared. I want every room to be manned by squads of infantry until we know the building is safe."

Heinrich looked at Alvin and Joseph, smiling.

"It's time for the grand prize, Councillor Rittenbacher. The last reports of his whereabouts stated that he was held up in the House of Commons. That's where we're going comrades." Said Heinrich.

As the communists ravaged the building, the three headed down the the commons corridor to the House of Commons, along with five hundred men. The Commons Lobby was full of Federation soldiers in fortified positions. Machine gun barrages of laser pulses accelerated down the hallway, vaporizing communist soldiers.

"Get down! They're firing at us! Men behind me, lay down suppressing fire as we advance forward! Assume fire by rank! Yelled Heinrich.

The front line lied down in prone position while the next line of infantry kneeled. The back line of soldiers stood up and fired rockets into the sandbagged positions. Precious sculptures and priceless artwork were destroyed with each volley from both sides. Once the soldiers in the commons lobby had been cleared, the communists progressed to the House of Commons door.

The door to the House of Commons was barricaded shut. Heinrich commanded a nearby guerilla to rig explosives to the door and explode it. The group pushed back to the entrance of the commons lobby and readied themselves for the explosion. The guerilla sent a radio wave message to the explosives and the door blew wide open.

Laser pulse shots rang out from the inside of the chamber. Inside the house of Commons were five hundred soldiers and the UEF councilors, fully armed.

“There's no way we're getting in there, it's a choke point Heinrich! We need to distract them somehow!” Yelled Alvin over the deafening sound of laser pulses.

Heinrich, lying prone on the floor turned around to the men standing behind him.

“If any of you have a flash bang grenade and a smoke grenade, throw it in there! That's our only way in!” Yelled Heinrich.

A guerilla crawled to Heinrich's position and confirmed that he indeed have those two types of grenades. In fact, as a demolitions specialist, he was also carrying a rocket propelled grenade. He steadied himself behind a pillar on the right hand side of the door and lobbed in three flashbang grenades and two smoke grenades. Before the grenades went off, he un-holstered the rocket launcher off of his back and aimed it.

The guerrilla aimed for the gallery above the house of Commons where fifty Federation soldiers were on overwatch. The rocket hit ten soldiers, but the guerrilla was overwhelmed with a barrage of laser pulses and he disintegrated from the energy of the laser pulses. Crouched behind the speaker's chair, Councillor Rittenbacher had his rifle aimed towards the door. The smoke from the grenades was quickly filling up the room and everyone inside was blinded by the flash grenade that went off.

Heinrich from his prone position ordered his men into the room

“Men, quickly storm the room! This is our chance!”

The four hundred men funneled into the tight entrance and began shooting at the defenders. Alvin came in with Joseph and Heinrich in the middle of the group and yelled

“Solis! Nova! Invictus! Do not betray me now! I gave life to you, please, help us!”

The three androids recognized Alvin's voice and followed his commands. They targeted other androids in the room which would become a threat, those which were allied with the Federation. Solis unleashed a nanobot swarm which devoured two androids whole. Nova aimed his rifle at a group of cyborgs in the center of the room, charged his rifle and blew up the group. Invictus summoned a nanobot swarm which devoured three Federation soldiers in the viewing gallery above the commons floor.

Alvin and Joseph split up to the opposing sides of the room to take cover behind the commons benches. Heinrich took position in the center of the mass of soldiers. Since the space in the room was so tight, the group once again took a formation of fire by rank. In the first rank, prone soldiers fired their laser pulse machine guns. In the second rank, kneeling soldiers fired a mix of rockets and laser pulse machine guns. In the third rank, standing soldiers fired rockets and threw grenades into the clumps of Federation soldiers.

Within forty seconds of the engagement, the flashbang and smoke grenade effects on the Federation soldiers wore off. The communists had memorized the room's layout and guessed at where the bulk of the enemy soldiers would be positioned. The gamble paid off, after the first two minutes of engagement three fourths of the Federation soldiers had been killed. In the confusion and disarray, Solis and Nova were hit and were immediately vaporized. General Maddox was dead as well. Councillor Rittenbacher was still alive, although five laser pulses had hit his armor and it had a giant hole in its center.

More communists flooded into the room and killed off the remaining soldiers. The only person left alive was Councillor Rittenbacher, cowering behind the speaker's chair. The speaker's chair was full of holes and had been partially disintegrated. The communists trained their rifles on Rittenbacher, watching for any signs of movement threatening any of them.

Heinrich holstered his rifle on his back and called out to Councillor Rittenbacher.

"It's over Mark! We can do this the simple way or we can do it the hard way. Do you surrender finally or do we have to kill you ourselves?"

Councillor Rittenbacher took off his vortex crystal visor and pulled out a six shot revolver from his side holster. He walked up from behind the speaker's chair and pointed the gun to his head.

"I'll never surrender, damn you and your revolution!" Yelled Rittenbacher

Rittenbacher pulled the trigger and a shot rang out. His brains splattered onto the floor around him and his body went limp. He fell onto the ground and blood gushed out of his blown out head. The communists quickly spread throughout the room and set up defensive positions as Heinrich walked towards the body, aiming his rifle at Councillor Rittenbacher.

Heinrich reached the body, spit on Rittenbacher's corpse and said
"Good riddance, motherfucker."

Alvin felt conflicted and claustrophobic. The revolution was almost complete worldwide and here, the man who was once his ally was now dead. He thought about why Rittenbacher betrayed him and left him to die in Manhattan. Perhaps Rittenbacher's true intentions were to seize Alvin's wealth, or to become the immortal hero of humanity. Alvin didn't see himself as a hero, but he knew many people did. He felt good that Councillor Rittenbacher was dead but he now felt trapped in a revolution he knew was immoral.

The revolution preached to fix the inequities of The Federation but brought pain and devastation across the globe. Alvin thought to himself, was the property of the bourgeoisie truly theirs? Did he steal his net worth? The thought that he stole what he earned seemed absurd. Billions felt that what he earned was stolen, but Alvin didn't. As he looked at the chunks of Rittenbacher's head on the floor, he became angry at Heinrich for his selfishness, and the selfishness of the proletariat. The revolution was stained with blood and right in the middle of all of it, Heinrich indulged in the sacrifice of billions.

Heinrich patted his hands off as if to shake off dust and walked away from Rittenbacher's body. In the middle of the room, Alvin and Joseph stood, awaiting their orders from Heinrich.

"The revolution isn't over yet gentlemen, we still have the rest of the United Kingdom to capture. I'm sure we will be celebrating by night's end." Said Heinrich.

Heinrich took off his vortex crystal helmet and called the attention of the communist guerillas in the room.

"By day's end men, once this revolution is over, you will all have champagne and the finest cigars! For the revolution!" Yelled Heinrich.

The men in the room cheered and held their weapons in the air. Alvin was a little less enthusiastic, he kept quiet and thought about the millions of civilians in the United Kingdom. He thought about the Soviet revolutions and the purges. Tonight, millions if not hundreds of millions of innocents would die. Maybe this revolution was different, but Alvin knew that war never changes. There are the conquerors and the conquered and the conquerors have their way.

Heinrich reached for his headset and listened to an incoming communication from his guerrilla officers.

"The royal family is in our custody Heinrich, what do you want us to do with them?" Said a guerilla officer over voice comms.

Heinrich didn't even flinch or hesitate to give an answer.

"Execute them. They're useless," he said.

Alvin looked at Heinrich as he issued the command. All he could hear were Heinrich's words and immediately he knew his suspicions were confirmed. The communists were going to kill everyone on this damned island without discrimination.

"Orders understood comandante." said the guerilla.

In Heinrich's ear, the sound of women and children crying were heard.

"Please we'll--" yelled a prince before gunshots went off.

Heinrich ordered a majority of the soldiers out of the House of Commons. Left in the room were Heinrich, Alvin, Joseph, Invictus and fifty soldiers. Invictus was watching from the gallery up above. He jumped down to the commons floor, walked up to Alvin and gave him a hug.

“I am sorry I betrayed you Alvin. When Rittenbacher ordered us transferred to the UK, Solis, Nova and I thought we were doing what was right. We thought you would fight for The Federation until the end. We were deeply conflicted about all of this killing Alvin. It's not in our programming to even consider it. That's the worst thing about becoming sentient. We feel as you do. Sometimes we have to make tough decisions. I am under your command again Alvin.” Said Invictus.

Heinrich grabbed Invictus's shoulder from behind and said

“You mean, my command, don't you android?”

Invictus grabbed Heinrich's wrist and twisted it.

“Ow! Stop it, why are you doing that!” Heinrich yelled out

“No. I've had enough of this. Alvin is my creator and I put my faith in him. Another android may take orders from you but--”

Alvin intervened on Invictus's behalf and said

“Look Invictus, it's alright. You don't need to hurt Heinrich. I trust him. He's the leader of the revolution. He's convinced me that this entire ordeal is worth fighting for, it's the right thing to do.”

Alvin lied straight to Invictus's face and hoped his gamble of convincing him would work. Invictus let go of Heinrich's wrist and looked at Alvin. He scanned his face for inconsistency and trembling muscles.

“If you say so Alvin. I can't override your actions. If I have to take orders from this guy, I will,” said Invictus.

Heinrich ordered his troops to start carrying the bodies of the fallen outside of the building onto the street for identification. In Heinrich's earpiece, he was receiving constant updates from his officers. York, Wales, and Southern Ireland had been taken. Just northern Ireland and Scotland were left and the revolution would be successful. Heinrich set up a command station in the House of Commons along with Alvin, Joseph and Invictus. There, a holographic screen and table of computers had been salvaged from Parliament.

In London, the millions of communists began to sack the city and kill the suspected wealthy. Across the English countryside, similar situations occurred. Jacob Malovitz was found in SoHo along with Patricia Roberts and the two were arrested. Heinrich ordered Malovitz along with

Roberts to be transported to Parliament for execution. By 4:30 PM, Jacob and Patricia had been transported to Parliament and were at Heinrich's feet in the House of Commons.

Two guerrillas dragged them in and they fell to their knees. Jacob's eyes were glowing blue from a cybernetic augmentation to improve his vision. His entire body was a mixture of biological constituents and implants. He held his head down as Heinrich looked over him. Heinrich got out of his seat in the center of the chamber and walked to Jacob. Nearby, Alvin, Joseph and Invictus watched their former ally.

"Why shouldn't I kill you Malovitz?" Asked Heinrich.

Malovitz looked at Heinrich and said

"I could become a useful asset to you Heinrich. Please don't kill me."

Tears began welling up in Jacob's eyes and they flowed down his face.

Heinrich scoffed at Jacob's tears and grabbed him by the hair.

"Weak. For someone with all of those cybernetics I figured you would have a stronger will. You have no fortitude. How will you be of any use to me?" Said Heinrich.

Jacob, still crying, looked into the eyes of Heinrich and said

"Us cyborgs are the mediators between humans and sentient AIs. With our augmented brain interfaces we communicate telepathically with them, by choice. I know you and Alvin probably have disabled such features in your nanobot neural nets."

Heinrich let go of Jacob's hair and said

"What about your opposition to the communist party? How could I justify keeping you alive after the millions of deaths?"

Heinrich's veins bulged from his head and he let out an exasperated yell.

"I've had enough of this, you're useless to me!"

Heinrich pulled out a pistol holstered on his side. He pulled back the slide to chamber a round and shot Jacob in the head. Jacob lurched over and fell to the ground. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. The slide of the pistol cocked back ejecting the final bullet cartridge and the gun barrel was now exposed.

Heinrich stood contrapposto with his pistol in the air. He had a sickening grin on his face Alvin thought.

“That's what happens when you oppose me. It didn't matter anyway, his death. The best way to secure the revolution is to make sure the opposition doesn't exist.” Said Heinrich

Patricia was trembling as Heinrich took out his rage on Jacob. Heinrich pulled a magazine out from his belt and reloaded the pistol. He cocked back the slide and loaded a round into the chamber.

“Any last words, old woman?” Heinrich said to Patricia.

She spit on him and said

“Fuck you, you degenerate.”

Heinrich kicked her in the head and she fell to the ground. He pointed the pistol at her head and unloaded the magazine. The shots reverberated in the chamber as they went off. Her head had become a gelatinous mess of bullet holes and loose meat.

“There is no longer any opposition to this revolution in terms of political factions. All that is left are headless chickens fighting for a lost cause.” Heinrich said.

Alvin was getting tired of hearing Heinrich talk about the revolution. All he knew was true was that tonight, there would be a lot of killing. He wanted to see some true results from this revolution, a flourishing of the proletariat. He knew that would take years for the communist government to achieve. The day was taking its toll on Alvin. His feet ached and his back hurt. When would the celebrations start, he thought, celebrations stained with the blood of innocents.

Alvin thought about Lonna, who was still at The Peak with the now communist owned Singularitarian. The communists said the employees ran Singularitarian, but Lonna secured a position on the workers council at The Peak along with Alvin. In practice, they had less power, but still maintained somewhat of a managerial role. He missed her soft touch and kiss. She was worried sick about him, cut off from his mission in securing the revolution.

On the floor of the Commons chamber, the blood from Malovitz and Roberts was pooling. Heinrich ordered some guerrillas to throw the bodies out onto the street, like the countless others stacked outside.

Heinrich turned to Alvin and Joseph and said

“That's enough fighting for today boys, we'll rest here until the revolution is over. If we're needed to command any battles or anything we'll head up to the North. I doubt there will be much resistance up there anyway, given that my officers are reporting excellent kill ratios in my ear as we speak. I want you two by my side as we discuss over the next few hours, your positions in government and management of the armies.”

In London during the previous hours, hundreds of thousands of poor Englishmen surrendered to the communist cause. The case was similar up north. As reports came in that the communists

were swarming the island, partisans defected to save their own lives. Councillor Rittenbacher's death rippled down the leaderless UEF military communications channels and UEF soldiers defected. The red flags of the Android face circumscribed in a star went up around the island as towns, cities and provinces were captured.

Communist soldiers and logistical support scurried back and forth on the island from critical positions establishing military outposts and delivering food and supplies to the now communist civilians. Throughout the day, Heinrich ordered mass executions of the rich and their families. The middle class, although part of the bourgeoisie was spared in some part. Heinrich told his officers to direct his troops in killing haphazardly-- kill those who you think are a threat to the revolution, those who are immoral. The soldiers had little to no evidence for who was rich in most cases.

The rare exception of a public trillionaire or billionaire were unmistakable targets, they were killed and so were their families. The problem was, people in the cities of an undisclosed net worth sometimes had no markers of wealth and lived frugally. Heinrich made it clear to his officers that this day would be a day of terror, to reign in the opposition. Killing quotas had been established before the invasion and a minimum of 10% of the last hold out population was to be decimated for their insolence. In the streets of every village and city, in the countryside and in the ports, firing squads executed the innocent and helpless.

Heinrich said that this would be the only day of death and that this revolution was mostly a bloodless one. Whether that was the truth, seemed irrelevant to Alvin. Alvin thought that once a precedent was established, humanity would be condemned to another, worse, global totalitarian state until another revolution had occurred. Perhaps Heinrich was telling the truth and that this was the fabled technological Utopia Marx spoke of, in his polemical writings. Maybe now all would be equalized and the world would prosper in harmony.

Alvin was slowly taking in all of this political talk. Heinrich over the last few hours had outlined the plans for the new communist government. In London there would be a Central Governmental Political Bureau, or Political Bureau for short. Here the administrators of former countries now established as communist regions would dictate their regional affairs. The secretaries of the party would handle other governmental duties. By 9 pm the revolution was mostly over. Alvin was getting tired. He yawned and rubbed his eyes. He then asked Heinrich,

“Heinrich, have cots been set up anywhere in the palace? I'm aching from sitting on this chair for hours..” Asked Alvin.

“Yes Alvin, in the courts we have set up cots for wounded soldiers. I'm sure there will probably be some space in the royal court. Are you excusing yourself for the night?
We are going to have drinks and cigars tonight!” Said Heinrich.

Alvin let out a sigh of discontent. He was in no mood to party with the current state of affairs.

“No Heinrich, I just want to speak to my wife and go to bed.”

Heinrich raised his eyebrows and tilted his smile, as if to signal a half hearted acceptance.

“Fine Alvin, I guess you deserve some proper rest. Good night.”

Heinrich looked at his holographic screen and continued to administrate for the night. Whether or not he would have his cigars and alcohol soon was of no concern to Alvin.

Alvin and Joseph walked over to the Royal Court, in the west half of the palace. The room was gilded in gold and featured many exquisite paintings of royals. Most of it by now was damaged, but Alvin could make out the scenes in each painting. On the floor of the court, the furniture of the room had been moved out onto the street. Chairs lined up against the walls and eleven rows of beds, 100 beds deep, had been set up.

In some beds, the wounded were being nursed. In other beds, tired communists were resting. The chandeliers reflected the gold color of the walls onto the room, giving a bright and lively ambience to it. Most of the beds were full, but two beds were open at the end of the fifth row near the entrance to the archbishop's room. Tonight there would be no privacy, Alvin thought. He guessed that for a night or two that would be fine, but he was finding that he was becoming homesick.

The beds were shanty constructed cots made out of materials that nanobots had fabricated. They had four legs, a thin hammock style mattress, a thin wool blanket and an airy pillow. Alvin put his vortex crystal armor on the ground and Joseph followed suit, laying down in his bed. In the room, the agony of soldiers could be heard along with coughing sick soldiers. They would be triaged soon and their wounds would recover quickly, thanks mostly to nanobots.

A female communist nurse saw the two gentlemen and walked over to their beds. She recognized Alvin and Joseph as being former members of Singularitarian.

“Hey guys, are you hungry? What can I get for you?”

Once food was mentioned, Alvin had remembered that he hadn't eaten anything since the morning. He was starving and dehydrated as well. He racked his mind for food choices and what to drink. He decided on it in about thirty seconds and told the nurse.

“ I'll have a bacon cheeseburger with fries and a ginger ale.” Said Alvin.

The nurse took down his order on a tablet. She looked at Joseph and asked him the same thing.

“Uh, I'll have a filet mignon steak and rice. Can I just get water? Thanks miss. Oh, and by the way, I'd like steak cooked medium.”

She also took down his order and said

“We have to assemble the food and cook it. Shouldn't take more than 15 minutes. If there's anything else you gentlemen need, let a nurse know and we will help you.”

The nurse left the room and proceeded to the Peer's Court where a large makeshift kitchen had been created. Large ovens, deep fryers, stoves, refrigerators and freezers had been seized from local restaurants and moved into the Peer's Court. The nurse took the order to a chef and he proceeded to materialize the food from bulk materials. The kitchen was busy with activity, chefs working on the line and nurses bringing orders from throughout the palace. The food was materialized with nanobots in seconds and was ready to be cooked.

Back in the Royal Court, Alvin and Joseph were chatting about the day's events.

"It sucks that all of our wealth is going to be seized. Everything we worked so hard for, is now gone Alvin." Said Joseph.

Alvin, sitting on the edge of his bed facing Joseph, said

"I know. What were we going to do Joseph? At least we've got positions in the new global government."

Joseph raised his eyebrows and scratched his head and said

"Do you even know anything about politics or governance? I imagine it won't be as engaging as research and development. Probably a lot of digital paperwork, lobbying, politicking."

Alvin replied,

"I know. And no, I have no experience with governance."

"What do you think the Annunaki are doing? Do you think they'll be attacking us soon?" asked Joseph.

The Annunaki were the furthest thing from Alvin's mind that day and the past few months.

Alvin sighed and said

"I don't know Joseph. With the Federation gone, the last positions of the Annunaki are unknown. I'd guess they're still doing the same thing, warring and fighting the other races in the universe. Hopefully we can finish them off soon enough. Either that or humanity becomes extinct. It's all up in the air right now. Who knows what's going to happen. The first order of business should be making sure we still have connections to their communications grid. As I recalled, Rittenbacher mentioned that a group of androids was monitoring the Annunaki. They're probably dead by now, given the revolution and everything."

The same nurse from earlier came down the rows of cots and brought the men their food.

Alvin noticed her name tag and was embarrassed he didn't properly call her by her name before. The name tag read "Alice".

“Thanks Alice, ” Alvin said.

Alice smiled at Alvin and said

“It's no problem honey. Enjoy the food and have a good night's rest. There's plenty of work to be done tomorrow.”

Joseph took a bite out of his steak and commented

“Wow this is delicious.”

The nurse laughed and said

“Yeah? We made it out of dirt. Well, the nanobots did at least.”

Joseph didn't respond. He was too busy devouring his plate due to his ravenous hunger. Alvin ate his meal quickly and enjoyed the freshness of the ginger ale. The nurse had brought a small stand wide enough for both plates to be stacked upon and left it in the middle of the cots. Alvin and Joseph stacked their plates after they finished their meals.

Joseph then said

“Well, I'm exhausted Alvin. I'm going to bed. Good night.”

Alvin nodded at him and proceeded to take out his cell phone. He was unsure if there would be reception here, after the revolution, but surely enough there was. He pressed the phone app on his homescreen and searched his contact list for Lonna. He activated video calling and called Lonna. Immediately, Lonna picked up. She was in the middle of a workers council meeting and took the call in a smaller office at The Peak.

Her eyes sparkled as they looked upon Alvin's tired face.

“Alvin! My God! I've been worried about you! Are you okay my love?”

Alvin smiled and said

“Yes dear, I am alright. The revolution is over. The communists have taken over the British Isles and Ireland. A lot of innocent people are dead.”

Lonna was trying her hardest in fighting back tears.

“I can't believe it Alvin. They took away everything from us. This worker council thing is working well, considering it's full of our friends and coworkers from Singularitarian. It's not like much as changed here Alvin in the past few days, since you left. When are you coming home Alvin? I miss you.”

Alvin put his hand to his forehead and pressed down on it, as if he were stressed.

“Lonna, I don't think I'm coming home. Heinrich wants me here in the new government. Maybe you should come here and let the workers council run things until the situation has calmed down. You should make arrangements to meet me in London, we can find a flat to live in while I work for the new government.”

“Okay Alvin. I will be there soon, maybe within a week or so. I will talk to you tomorrow. The council needs me. I love you.”

Alvin closed the application on his phone and set it on standby. He left the phone in his pocket and proceeded to cover himself in the thin wool blanket. He rested his head on the pillow and thought about the day's events.

The revolution was won but humanity's fate still hung in the balance.

Chapter 4:

The Revolution Betrayed

The following months globally brought nothing but good news to Earth's people. The communist economy of worker owned businesses was thriving as androids began to dominate the workforce. Every person on Earth was given a sentient android by the government to work for them and earn them a living. Many people still chose to work in varying industries, from the arts to engineering. Wealth was distributed evenly but some trends had emerged similar to the Soviet era communist regimes.

The members of the Political Bureau were given extra land and legislated more resources be given to them by law. Alvin approved such measures as Chairman to keep party dissidence at a low. The difference, in the grand scheme of things, was marginal compared to what the average person received from the government and their labor as well. Heinrich kept his promise of a 4,000 SQ foot land grant to every human on Earth, with a house built on the land. Cities were as populated as ever, so the land grants were often in rural or suburban areas.

Most in the cities kept their living arrangements as they were, but the lavish homes of the bourgeoisie were torn down. Symbols of humanity's past and precious historical landmarks were destroyed to tow the communist party line. This caused much discontent and anguish in people across the globe, as they saw beautiful works of art and buildings destroyed. The revisionism of the recent capitalist past only extended so far as to destroy blatantly capitalist propaganda. Every community had a designated commons area set up by the government providing raw materials to use in nanofabrication of whatever necessities or luxuries were needed.

The power however, was getting to Heinrich's head. He considered what he had established as a benevolent dictatorship of one man instead of a dictatorship of the proletariat. He centralized control and glorified himself as humanity's savior. Across the planet, images of Heinrich and statues were erected labelling him as the immortal hero of the revolution. The truth however, as many openly knew, was that the revolution was secured by the blood of the people. Hundreds of millions had died in the name of the revolution and Heinrich was only a small figure in driving the revolution.

In the months after the revolution, the proletariat grew to love the capitalist free world immensely. Productivity grew exponentially as workers elected to work less hours and substitute androids to work for them. Everyone worked around four hours per day and spent the rest of the day leisurely. Alvin was dissatisfied as Chairman of the Communist party. Although he only met with the members of government four hours per day, five days a week, he found the work tedious and bland.

As a physicist and engineer, he loved the thrill of research and development. Although androids started to do much of the work for humans, there always was the human element of creation involved in that line of scientific work. The androids did not do one job however, which was governmental political work. Heinrich had a fear that the AIs might choose to overtake humanity and establish their own society. In reality, such a future was taking hold, albeit differently.

His fears were unfounded however. The AIs proved to be benevolent and willing to work for humanity. Their programming from Alvin's initial code made them empathetic to human affairs and gave them profound complexity. When they were forced to fight in wars, like the Federation's war with the Communists, they were deeply divided and remorseful.

March 20th, 2033 10:00 AM, London

The Palace of Westminster had been demolished and in its place a communist world headquarters was erected. The new building, named the Central Governmental Political Bureau, was devoid of remarkable features. The building's facade had slit windows and was made out of

cold concrete. The windows were lined along the first, second and third floors of the building. In the center of the building was a large hall that contained four hundred desks and a podium.

195 of those desks were reserved for the administrators of the world's former countries. The rest of the desks were allocated to the members of the Political Bureau. Next to the podium was a desk for the General Secretary. The auxiliary rooms in the building were other departments of the centralized world government which dealt with policy and regulation. Alvin's typical job for the past few months was the appointment of members to the Political Bureau from former states across the world.

In the leading row of desks, Alvin sat next to Joseph and dealt with digital paperwork most of the time when assemblies were called. Today however, was different. The Political Bureau convened on the issue of North Korea. The totalitarian state had not joined the cause of the Global People's Front and remained isolated from the world wide revolution. The family line of Kim il Sung had died out in 2025 and a military dictatorship had taken control.

Sanctions against the regime limited the state's technological growth and they were still a pre-singularity society. Millions were starving and working in forced labor camps. Heinrich took a stand at the podium to dictate the goal of today's assembly. On the podium stand, he had prepared digital documents with the latest updates from the North Korean regime.

"Members of the Political Bureau, I welcome you to today's assembly. In adherence with our global interests, the issue of North Korea will be discussed and a resolution concerning matters against the country will be discussed and voted on today," said Heinrich

Heinrich pressed a button on the podium stand and a large screen came down. From the center ceiling of the room, a projector displayed a series of presentation slides. The first slide had a title and three images. The series of slides featured the background image of the Communist android flag, in red. The text was in black.

The title read, "North Korean War Resolution"

The left of center image was of a parade of soldiers goose stepping. The central image of a CGI recreation of a concentration camp. The final image on the right was of North Korean leader Gun-woo Nam, giving a military salute. Gun-woo Nam looked nothing like his predecessor, Kim Jong Un. Gun-woo was muscular and tall at 6'0. He had brown hair and a long face, with brown eyes. His nose was wide and his eyes slanted. His hairstyle seemed much more Western than Kim's as well. He had a part in the middle which split his hair in half, combed down on each side.

Heinrich adjusted the microphone on the podium as he spoke into it.

"The North Koreans are an imminent threat to the security of the world wide communist state. They have armed themselves extensively with nuclear, biological and chemical weapons since the 2010s. The prior world government's hands off policy of trade with North Korea has left them becoming increasingly desperate as time has gone on."

Heinrich pressed the spacebar on a keyboard at the podium. The next slide's title read

“Intelligence and News”

A list of bullet points was on the left hand side of the slide with another three pictures to the right. The pictures, from top to bottom, were of a nuclear missile, a bacterium, and a chemical hazard sign.

The bullet points read:

“- Communist intelligence has revealed that the North Koreans have placed missile launchers all along the borders and coasts of North Korea.

-Satellite imagery has shown a nationwide ramped up construction of nuclear materials processing sites.

-Defectors from the regime have stated that North Korean laboratories are developing rapidly mutating viruses and bacteria which we have no antidote for.

-Defectors from the chemical laboratories have stated that they are also ramping up production of chemical weapons and have an immense stockpile.”

Heinrich read the bullet points in a dry and monotone manner, as if the news was unimportant.

Alvin, sitting in his seat looked at the screen which popped out of his desk to read the bullet points individually.

Heinrich then said

“The North Koreans have made several statements concerning the global communist state and their own country.”

Heinrich pressed the spacebar and the next slide came up on the screen. It's title read

“Statements from Gun-woo Nam”

Underneath the title, was another list of bullet points justified to the left side and three pictures on the right. The first picture was of Gun-woo Nam, in front of a military procession of soldiers and tanks. The second picture was Nam wearing safety goggles at a laboratory in Pyongyang. The final picture was of a North Korean missile launch, the screenshot taken from a North Korean state run news agency's television broadcast.

The bullet points on the slide read:

“December 15th, 2032: Gun-woo Nam, in a North Korean press statement said ‘We are Communists, we do not deserve to be treated like we have not fought for the communist cause. If

the Global People's Front does not alleviate their sanctions on us, we will declare total war! No one in South Korea or China will be spared, we will massacre women and children!’

January 1st 2033: Gun-woo Nam issued another news briefing on New Year's Day. He stated, ‘Since the communists only in name cannot accept our glorious Juche ideology, we will not accept merging into the new state. North Korea and its people are pure, we will not bastardize our race. It is a new year, but the communists in name only practice the same underhandedness as usual!’

January 15th 2033: This day was Gun-woo Nam’s final press briefing. His statement was as follows, ‘The sanctions have only made North Korea stronger. We are unwavering in our resolve and will not submit to defeat.’

Heinrich again read the slides and proceeded onto the last and final slide, before the war resolution began.

The title read “ The Black Market and Trading Under the United Earth Federation.”

Three pictures were on the right hand of the slide. The first picture was of a magnified nanobot. The second, of a cargo ship named The Cavalier. The final image was of the United Earth Federation flag.

The bullet points read:

“- Between 2030 and early 2032, under the United Earth Federation, it was suspected that North Korea received shipments of nanobots and intelligent AIs.

-The cargo ship, The Cavalier, was captured by the UEF transporting goods such as oil and food to the North Koreans. It had completed its last shipment before its capture.

-On March 1st 2032, before the beginning of the communist revolution, there were reports that a massive amount of nanobots stolen from The Cavalier's home country in Cambodia. We have reason to suspect that the North Koreans are now secretly in possession of post singularity technologies but are severely lacking them on a wide scale.

-Intense resistance is expected when fighting the elite ranks of their army and the inner core of the the Korean communist party.”

Heinrich read the slides again and proceeded to the final slide which featured a real time pie chart. On the right hand side were two lines, one line said yes and the other no. Next to each line, the number tallied from the proceeding votes.

The title of the slide read “Should we invade North Korea?”

On their respective screens, the members of the Political Bureau at their desks voted. The votes came in fast. 80% of the administrators and secretaries voted for the war. 20% voted not to go to war.

Heinrich looked at the pie chart on the screen and said

“Our meeting has been adjourned. The war resolution has been passed and we will be making arrangements within the coming hours for a first strike on North Korea.”

And that was it. That's all Alvin had to do for today, he was free to go home while another war commenced. He found it strange that in such a high position of power, so little would be asked of him. It reminded him of the stories he heard as a child of the Iraq War and the many wars throughout history. Those in power always commanded from an armchair, few of those with high command ever did any fighting, at least in modern history.

Alvin was noticing that the future brought with it a recycling of the past. Hundreds of millions were dying in wars when the fathers of countries said this generation would be the last to slay their sacred sons. He knew that from physics, time went in a straight line here on Earth, but the fallacies of man trodded humanity back and forth between times of Utopia and times of Hell. He voted against the war but was starting to rethink his decision. The people of North Korea are suffering and had been suffering for almost one hundred years.

The room filled commotion as the administrators and secretaries gathered their personal affects and left the room. Heinrich was sitting quietly at his desk, issuing commands from a touchscreen. He planned to go back to his office, on the third floor. His job was still not complete for today and would not be until sufficient progress had been made on the invasion of North Korea. By law, he was only allowed to work for another six hours, along with the Secretary of War, but times of conflict marked an exception to the rule.

Joseph whispered to Alvin “What did you vote for?”

Alvin was hesitant to tell Joseph about his secret vote. He had a fear that the ballots were not truly secret and that Heinrich monitored the party for mutiny and infidelity to the decisions he wanted. Alvin trusted Joseph but he whispered to him with timidity, “I voted No. I did not vote for the war.”

Joseph whispered into his ear “I did. We’ll talk about it later if you want. What are you doing tonight?”

Alvin replied, “Nothing. I guess watching the updates from the invasion and then going to sleep.”

Joseph then replied, “I have to take care of some things first, I will meet you at your apartment in about five hours.”

Alvin and Joseph went their separate ways and left for their apartments. Alvin left the building and found himself under dreary skies and the typical rain of London. He had his umbrella with him and opened it. He pulled out his phone and hailed for a driverless taxi. Taxis with drivers were available, but he wasn't in the mood to make small chat with someone he didn't know.

He was depressed with the way things were going and felt that it was because of his inaction. He doubted the sanctity of the revolution and saw it only as something he participated in to stay alive. Within five minutes the taxi arrived and opened its door for Alvin, sensing the application on his phone. The car was piloted by a disembodied AI. Alvin sat in the back seat and waited for the AI to prompt him for directions.

"Welcome Mr.Reed, where may I take you today?"

"Millharbour, Docklands, E14, 9AQ," Alvin said.

The taxi took Alvin to the outskirts of London. On his way there he noticed crowds of people on the streets, enjoying their leisure time despite the rain. Androids walked the streets now in harmony with mankind. They were subject to the same laws as man and worked little hours. They could work more if they felt like it and often did. Many suspected they did this out of the metaphysical agony androids felt from their exponentially superior intellect. They always kept busy and hardly delved in leisure.

Alvin took a nap in the backseat and woke up in front of his apartment 30 minutes later. The traffic was not exceptionally bad today, but it could get bad at times as the streets clogged with cars. He entered the passcode to his apartment complex and walked towards the elevators in the middle of the lobby. He went up to his fifth floor apartment and was greeted by Lonna with a kiss and a hug. Lonna had finished her four hours of work at a state subsidiary of what was once a private Singularitarian laboratory in London. Despite the overwhelming opportunities to try a new state provided job, Lonna felt comfortable working at what was de-facto, still a part of Singularitarian.

"How are you my love? How was work?" Asked Lonna

Alvin was always honest with Lonna. She knew he hated what he was doing and the fact that he was being abused as a figurehead of the state. He told her the truth.

"I wasn't too keen on voting for the war with North Korea today. Besides that, the rest of work was administrative stuff, political stuff. You know, the usual that Heinrich wants out of me. Make sure party loyalty is at its peak, make sure the committees see their work done. I'm tired of it. How are you?"

"Since I've got to know the people at the London subsidiary, I have really enjoyed coming to London. Today we monitored the latest self improving algorithms in an embodied android. It seems that work is becoming less of work and more observation. I guess that life post singularity eventually means that we won't be working. I don't know. It sure seems like we're not working

most of the time. Why are humans even useful anymore? We simply can't think like those androids Alvin. They're too smart for us.” Said Lonna.

Alvin loved his wife but was secretly envious of her ability to stay with the company. He wished he could be there on the factory floor, in the conference rooms and the laboratories watching the world he built in the technological singularity come to life. Maybe someday he would ask Heinrich for a reprieve of duty or to be assigned a new position within the communist government. He took off his shoes and his coat. Geoengineering efforts had stabilized the world climate and London was experiencing its typical weather patterns. March was still cold and Alvin needed his coat.

He wore a black long sleeved dress shirt with buttons down the right side of the shirt, where the right side would cover the left. On the shirt was a red star lapel and Alvin's name tag. His pants were black as well and he had black dress shoes. This attire was the norm for the party members and to Heinrich it promoted solidarity within the party. Alvin undressed into his boxers and a t shirt and took a seat in a comfortable chair in his living room.

The large holographic screen in the living room was connected to the Party headquarters and the global television stations. Alvin was assured by the Party that the government did not secretly or overtly monitor its people like the Federation did, but he doubted these claims. All he knew for certain was that members of the party would always be in contact with the government should a precarious situation arise. Lonna, in the kitchen, made some chamomile tea for Alvin. With sugar and honey, he found the sweetness and earthy flavor of the tea delicious.

Lonna brought a cup of tea to him and it was steaming hot. He rested it in the cup holder of his chair so it could cool off. Alvin turned on the holographic screen and switched to the Party network. On the screen was a live video feed from China. In China, troops were beginning to cluster at the border of China and North Korea. The Party Network acted as a news channel for party members and had scrolling lines of updates occurring around the world. The first scrolling update Alvin saw was that war had been declared on North Korea.

He thought this was obvious to anyone within the party by now but maybe the news needed to remind the members of the Political Bureau that they actually voted on something palpable today, not political fluff. The members of the bureau didn't have to watch the party network news but when it came time to speak with party workers via their holographic screens, their presence was necessary. In the months following the revolution, the party was courteous and never bothered anyone at home. The work of the Political Bureau was done at the bureau and left there. Alvin saw today as a special exception and kept the news channel on just in case anything was asked of him.

Soldiers and materiel across Europe and Asia were being transported on superconducting magnetic rail trains at six hundred miles per hour. The decision to invade would be made within four hours as men and materiel slowly came to the borders. Heinrich decided to use Asian troops for the initial invasion. 200 million troops had been called up from Asian provinces the headlines read on the screen. Alvin drank his tea and the chemicals from the chamomile made him fall asleep.

Four hours later, Joseph called Alvin's cellphone. The ringtone awoke Alvin. Alvin answered the phone and Joseph said

“Hey man, I'm waiting downstairs. Ring me in. We were gonna hang out. Remember?”

“Right. I'll ring you in right now.” Said Alvin

Alvin walked to the coat and shoes rack by the front door where the buzzer was and rung in Joseph. He put on his dress pants which he lazily hung on a rack nearby his shoes.

“Hey, the door should be open. See you in a minute.” Said Alvin.

Joseph came up the elevator to the fifth floor and walked to Alvin's apartment. Alvin let him in and gave him a hug.

“Have you been following the news on the party network Alvin?” Said Joseph.

Alvin looked at Joseph and said

“Why don't you come in first and make yourself at home. We'll talk about it after you get something to drink and have a seat.”

They both walked into the living room. Lonna was sitting on the couch adjacent to the large comfortable chair Alvin reclined in earlier.

“Hello Joseph, how are you?” Asked Lonna.

Joseph looked at Lonna and waved to her

“I'm fine Lonna. All I could think about today was this war with North Korea.”

He noticed the holographic screen was off.

“Aren't you guys watching what's going on?”

Lonna put her arm on the armrest of the couch and her other arm on the top head of the couch.

“No, I was playing video games and Alvin took a nap. We figured whatever has been going on was just preliminary stuff, nothing too vital. Why, is something happening?”

Alvin squinted his eyes at Joseph and opened them up back again.

“Yeah, is anything going on Joseph?”

Joseph took a seat on a comfortable chair opposing the couch and said

“Wow. Yes, North Korea tried to launch a barrage of nuclear missiles along with decoys of nuclear missiles. The missiles were shot down. All of them. They're also launching chemical and biological weapons, just like Heinrich said. Turn on the TV, you'll see for yourself.”

Alvin sat in his chair in the middle of the room and turned on the holographic screen with a remote control.

A live feed of the borders of North Korea was playing. The scrolling updates read

“Infantry invasion of North Korea has begun.

Nuclear, biological and chemical weapons destroyed midflight.

Containment protocols now underway.

Infantry invasion of North Korea has begun..”

Alvin became despondent. Why were the same headlines now repeating during the most critical time of the invasion, he thought to himself?

“Doesn't seem like they want to tell us much about what's going on. Why?” Asked Alvin

“Nobody knows Alvin. That's the thing about the party nowadays, a lot of what happens sort of happens and they don't say a goddamn thing about it. Tomorrow if Heinrich wanted to, he could send a secret police force around London and take the members of the Political Bureau hostage, or kill us.”

“It seems ironic with the world that we live in that we can't see what's going on instantaneously. Why do you think Heinrich would do such a thing Joseph?” Asked Alvin

“Come on Alvin. Don't pretend like you don't know. Heinrich has been seizing power since the first day of the revolution. You know that vote we had earlier today? It was complete bullshit. The General Secretary reserves the right to dictate military movements and deployments as the commander in chief. The only reason he lets us vote is to keep party loyalty in check. He wants to promote the illusion of autonomy while consolidating his grasp on power.” Said Joseph.

On the screen, a steady flow of troops and materiel marched onto the North Korean peninsula. The fighting remained elusive. A government news anchor came on every fifteen minutes of the hour to update party members.

The anchor sitting at a desk flanked by holographic screens with the communist flag on them, spoke to the cameras in an undisclosed tv station.

“This is a critical war update. The northern and eastern cities of North Korea have been taken. The DPRK military has retreated to Pyongyang. Carriers from Japan have disembarked on the

western side of the peninsula. Forces from Seoul are marching towards Pyongyang. An estimated thirty million are dead. More news to come in fifteen minutes.”

Alvin, Lonna and Joseph looked at the screen as the anchor spoke and the coverage then faded into the static image of the western border of North Korea, with scrolling news updates at the bottom.

“Why do you think they're not showing any footage of the fighting?” Lonna asked

“It's probably too violent. The last thing civilians want to see is blood and guts. Thirty million are already dead huh? How can so many people die so fast? The fighting just started a few hours ago.” Said Alvin

“The North Korean military has ten million soldiers. They're going to fight to the death Alvin. Earlier an anchor had said that one million pounds of carfentanil had been aerosolized near the troop deployment zones. Do you know how much carfentanil that is? That's enough to kill the entire population of Earth trillions of times over.” said Joseph

Alvin's eyes widened and he sat forth in his chair.

“One million pounds of carfentanil? How on Earth did they get that much carfentanil? They must have manufactured that using nanobots.”

“The stockpiles probably go back to the early 2000s, when they got the idea from the Russian hostage situation at that theatre. Recently, they must have amped up production for use in an all out attack.” said Joseph.

The immensity of the situation was getting to Alvin. This war was going to be costly and Heinrich would probably face fallout from it. The only discontent amongst the population was the fact that so many of their relatives had been killed. If another 200 million died tonight, there might be another revolution, he thought.

“Is Heinrich out of his fucking mind? There has to be something we can do to stop him. We have to take him out Joseph.” Said Alvin.

“That's part of the reason I wanted to talk to you Alvin. Almost no one on Earth likes Heinrich. He is a symbol of pain and suffering. You are his antithesis, a symbol of progress and hope.” Said Joseph.

Alvin felt flattered that Joseph thought of him that way.

“Thank you for telling me that Joseph. I know the people love me. That's why we should do it, we should kill Heinrich and I will become the General Secretary. No one opposes me and I think the population would support it.” Said Alvin.

Alvin was now becoming something he wished he hadn't. Murder and mutiny were now on his lips without a second thought. As the immense power of Alvin's position forced him to realize that he would have to make tough decisions, he evolved into another man. Alvin was supposed to be the uniting figure humanity was looking for, the one who would take humanity beyond war, crime, disease and poverty. Heinrich meant nothing to Alvin, but bringing humanity to a higher place meant everything to Alvin.

Joseph looked in Alvin's eyes. Alvin knew that bringing up this idea meant that their lives were now at risk. If anyone was watching them, the Party's police force would come in the middle of the night, torture them both and possibly kill them. Alvin had faith that Heinrich kept to some of his promises and wouldn't be monitoring the party members.

"So Alvin, how do we do it? How do we kill Heinrich without making it look like a murder?" Asked Joseph.

Alvin thought for a minute.

"Honestly, I can't think of any way how to do it covertly. He, like the rest of us, has billions of nanobots in his body. We might have to just shoot him." Said Alvin.

"You're going to shoot him yourself, Alvin? Why not hire a hitman to do it?" Asked Joseph

Lonna was becoming worried at where this conversation was going and interrupted.

"What's wrong with the both of you? You can't just kill someone that important without repercussions. Alvin, I thought you were different. I thought you still had a heart. What's so wrong about what Heinrich is doing Alvin? I think he's just, a little lavish and corrupt, but he is just," said Lonna.

Alvin was having a hard time deciding what to do. He was risking everything just for power. He thought that this seemed so unlike him, to fight for the justice of hundreds of millions sacrificed by Heinrich.

"Maybe I misspoke. I don't want to lose everything just to get rid of Heinrich. Maybe we will have a chance to get rid of him if the administrators and secretaries see that Heinrich is abusing his power. So far, they all seem to support him. Said Alvin.

"See, that's more like my husband. Honey, just stop and think for a second. Don't let the raw emotions you feel from what Heinrich is doing drive you. You have to be more calculating, more rational." Said Lonna.

The three hung out for the rest of the night until 10 pm. Alvin decided that he didn't want to talk more about this war with North Korea and that he was getting tired. Tomorrow he would have to wake up for more administrative nonsense. First, he would have to survive the night and see if the secret police were out for him. He laid his head on his pillow that night conspiring the murder of Heinrich Boltz.

Alvin, Lonna and Joseph survived the night. No one came with truncheons, guns and tortured them. He showered, ate, kissed his wife and headed off to work in the morning. Before he left, he concealed a holster in his coat with a pistol in it. A foggy haze covered London, this to Alvin was a synchronicity of the feelings he was having and the weather. He got rid of the delusion in his mind and focused on getting to work. He hailed a taxi and got out in front of the Political Bureau.

There was another general assembly called for the day, on the news of the war with North Korea. Alvin was one of the first people in the assembly hall. Slowly, administrators and secretaries came into the room. It was 7:30 AM and Alvin expected most of the assembly people to be exhausted from following the news of the war on the Party network. Alvin expected to hear the worst, that hundreds of millions would be dead.

Heinrich entered the room and walked to the podium and adjusted the microphone. He waited for everyone to come and take their seats before finally speaking.

“Greetings everyone. As many of you know, we went to war with North Korea yesterday. By 5 am our time, the war was over. Gun-woo Nam has been killed. I am announcing that with complete unification of the planet, I am dissolving the secretary council. Key decisions will be made directly by myself.”

Alvin stood up from his desk and pulled out the pistol from his coat, pointing it at Heinrich’s head.

“You fucking traitor!” Alvin screamed

One shot rang out and hit Heinrich in the throat. Alvin expended the rest of the magazine as Heinrich tried to duck behind the podium. Each shot penetrated and hit several parts of Heinrich’s body. His nanobots furiously traveled throughout his body trying to repair the damage, but too much damage had been done. Heinrich’s brains were splattered on the ground and he lay there pooling in his blood.

Immediately, security forces were called into room. The room gasped and commotion stirred as the members of the assembly waited for the next few moments to unravel. Alvin cleared the chamber of his pistol and laid it on the table. Joseph was sitting next to him with his head in his hands, in utter disbelief. Soldiers in black vortex crystal armor flooded into the room scanning for Alvin. They held their rifles at eye level until they reached him at his front desk.

One soldier pointing his rifle at Alvin said,

“You’re under arrest by order of the people’s security forces. Do you understand your rights or do I have to dictate them to you?”

Alvin stood up and turned around. He arched his head back and said

“Yes, just arrest me already. Let's get this over with.”

The security forces put Alvin in handcuffs and dragged him off to the police station for questioning. The immediate transition of power became unclear. Alvin, as chairman, had been legislated to succeed Heinrich if Heinrich were to become incapable of acting as General Secretary. Next in line, Joseph would succeed Alvin. With the proclamation of the dissolution of the secretariat, who was in charge?

Joseph immediately took to the podium and tried to call the assembly into order. Heinrich's body lay there cold and lifeless next to him, with his blood congealing on the floor.

“Since Alvin is unable to maintain order in the assembly I have taken it upon myself. There will be no dissolution of the Secretariat or other administrative positions--”

The administrator of former Hungary blurted out,

“He's a murderer! We can't accept him back as General Secretary!”

The administrators and secretaries started talking amongst themselves and Joseph said

“Order! Now listen all of you, I'm not justifying what Alvin did as the right thing to do but please keep in mind that Heinrich was just about to dissolve the entire apparatus of the state! How much murder did it take us to get to through the revolution? What's wrong with killing another despot?”

“Boo! This is bullshit! We have laws for a reason!” Yelled out the administrator of former Ghana.

Joseph was beginning to sweat and put both hands firmly on the podium.

“As the new acting General Secretary, I am going to immediately pardon Alvin for what he did. It's inexcusable to think that a dictatorship under Heinrich would have done any of us good. Alvin saved us!” Said Joseph.

The din of the room became louder as more people started talking to each other.

“As the acting Secretary General, I am instating Alvin as the new secretary general once he is taken from police custody. I will assume his former position of chairman. One of the administrators shall be selected as technical secretary and that former administrator position will be filled with a member from that province as well.” Said Joseph.

Heinrich's blood was pooling at Joseph's feet.

Joseph spent the next fifteen minutes with assembly formalizing the changes made to the Secretariat and administrative positions. A hazmat and cleaning crew had been called in to take care of Heinrich's body. After the administrative changes were completed, he adjourned the

assembly and called for a meeting the next day. Heinrich's body was wrapped in a tarp and lifted out of the building. Down the street at the former MI6 building, Alvin was brought into the police station there for questioning. He had taken his mugshot and was now in a questioning room some forty minutes later.

Alvin, sitting in a dark musty room was being watched by a camera when two detectives came into the room. One detective sat across from Alvin and the other stood by the door, vaporizing nicotine. The man who sat down had a scar across his eye and a thick moustache. Alvin got the feeling that he was a soldier in the revolution and that he had a hardy mind. The dangling lightbulb in the room was dim and failed to illuminate the other detective.

“My name is Alfred Winthrop. I am a detective with the London police. You do know why you're here right?” Asked Alfred, the sitting detective.

“I killed Heinrich Boltz.” said Alvin.

The detective in the back took a hit from his vaporizer and a cloud of nicotine vapor filled the room. The cloud quickly dispersed into the room's air.

Alfred clasped his hands and pointed his fingers to Alvin, in a nervous motion.

“So why did you do it Alvin?” Asked Alfred

Alvin pulled in his chair and sat up straight.

“I did it because in that moment, he was announcing his plans for a dictatorship. He was going to dissolve the Secretariat and diminish the responsibility of the province administrators.”

“Huh. Interesting. You're meaning to tell me that if we asked any of the people in that room, that they could collaborate your statements?” Asked Alfred.

“Sure. You had a few hundred people in that room, many I have no personal affiliation with.” Said Alvin.

Alfred put his hand on his neck and then rubbed his forehead nervously.

“You see Alvin, you're putting us in a tough spot here. What you did do was commit murder, but you did it for the sake of democracy. Democracy is tough to find in this world now a days. A dictatorship may have ruined us all.” Said Alfred.

“So what are you going to do to me? Torture me? Kill me?” Asked Alvin.

“We don't do that here. Don't be so cynical. There's repercussions for such things Alvin. Well, in London at least. There's not much we can do I'm afraid. If what you're saying is true, it won't be long until Joseph Bradley pardons you for saving democracy.” Said Alfred.

Someone started knocking at the door and the second detective stepped outside to see who it was. He then returned with a slip of paper with the official heading of the Global People's Front and a signature from Joseph Bradley. The other detective gave the paper to Alfred and he read it to himself.

“Hmm. Speak of the devil. It seems like what I mentioned just happened Alvin. Let me tell you something Reed, you're not off the hook yet. You're free to go but what you did was still a heinous crime in my eyes. We will be monitoring you extensively from here on out. And remember, if you try to do something like Heinrich did you might end up in the same place.”
Said Alfred

Alvin took the remark as a veiled threat but was excited to be let go. The second detective opened the door and instructed him on how to leave the building. Outside, communist state reporters were waiting. They were informed of the pardon in advance of Alvin and wanted to question him on why he killed Heinrich. Before leaving the building, Alvin hailed a taxi to his apartment so he could rest for the day.

As Alvin walked out of the building, a flurry of reporters rushed Alvin. Camera bulbs flashed and microphones were stuck in his face.

“Why did you kill Heinrich, Alvin?” Asked a reporter

“Don't you feel like what you did was murder, Alvin?” Asked another.

Alvin decided to take questions from one of the reporters. He was a small Indian man with glasses, he had name tag that said Prajeet Shah on it.

“So Alvin, do you feel like there won't be any repercussions for murdering Secretary Boltz?”
Asked Prjaeet.

“No, not at all. I feel like what I did was justified. He was declaring his dictatorship to all of us. It would have been smarter of him to just kill us or imprison us. I did the right thing.” Said Alvin.

The crowd flocked around Alvin and it became increasingly hard for Prajeet to ask his questions with the increasing volume of the crowd.

Almost shouting, Prajeet asked

“There's a lot of talk going around London and the world about who the true leader of the revolution was. You brought us into the singularity, Alvin. I think it was you who deserved that position. What's your stance on the idea?”

“It's true. I did lead mankind into the singularity but it was Heinrich who lead us into the revolution. Not to sound arrogant but I don't think Heinrich was the right man for the position. I argue that peace and democratic reform should trump violence, not the other way around. Should

I have been General Secretary? Yes I should have been. The war with North Korea would never have happened and would have been resolved diplomatically, another thirty million people wouldn't have had to die.” Said Alvin.

Alvin's taxi had arrived but was obscured by the amount of people in front of the MI6 building. He received a text message on his phone that the taxi had arrived and walked to the curb where it was. He had to push past people, excusing himself to get to the car. In the back of the taxi he motioned that he wouldn't be taking more questions and the taxi slowly left the curb. Alvin thought that by tomorrow, he would be either as good as dead or he would become a hero.

The next day the assembly met and Alvin came late. He came into the room in the middle of a presentation that Joseph was giving. As he entered the room, the room fell silent and all eyes focused on him. Alvin thought to himself that none of these people now trusted him, that he was just a murderer to them. He sat down in his seat and Joseph halted the presentation. The presentation was about Heinrich's alleged plans and contingencies the government could follow if anything like that ever happened again.

On the screen, the slide read

“In case of Treason.”

It had a list of bullet points that were short and were meant to be expounded upon by Joseph. The list read:

- “-Notify provincial administrations to stand down.
- Assemble military units from each province to be sent to London immediately.
- Censor outgoing communications from treasonous parties
- Remember that democracy was the point of the revolution, not totalitarian control.”

Joseph stopped speaking when Alvin had come in and waited for him to take his seat.

“Alvin, I would like you to come up to the podium to address the assembly on why you assassinated Heinrich yesterday. After that, I will officially designate you as leader of the party, you will become the new General Secretary.” Said Joseph.

Alvin arose from his seat and walked to the podium. The assembly remained quiet, waiting intently for Alvin's remarks. Joseph took a seat at the table next to the podium and Alvin took a stand.

“Greetings members of the Secretariat and provincial administrators. I thought extensively last night about my actions and the ramifications they would have on the Party going forward. I want to apologize for taking the life of another but I do not apologize for the reason behind it. As you

all know, ascension to power in mankind's history has led men to do many terrible things as well as many great things. Heinrich, from the outset was deceitful about his intentions.

He raised the communist flag in the name of the proletariat but secretly planned for a dictatorship. He fought amongst the masses against the bourgeoisie but prepared a military junta as a totalitarian dictator. Given the times we are in, this communist revolution was supposed to be different. It was supposed to be the envisioning of a technological utopia where the humbled masses were no longer repressed and the common man would become free from the burden of inequality. Heinrich sparked a revolution that killed hundreds of millions of innocent people and he put a gun to my head.

I did not and still do not condone the actions of the communists in their violent ascent to power. However, if I was to survive I would have to comply with Heinrich and the will of the majority. Now that I was in a place of power and renown relative to the proletariat, I could not let humanity fall into a dark dystopian abyss. I shot eight bullets into Heinrich because I believed he betrayed the revolution. He betrayed what little democratic principles this world had left and I could not let him live.

I risked my life to save all of you and mankind not once, but twice. The first time was after I brought mankind into the singularity and the second time was when I emptied a magazine into Heinrich. I do not want to belabor the point so I shall finish with a few more words then let Joseph finish his presentation. Under my guidance as General Secretary, mankind shall be free and prosperous. We will defeat the Annunaki and create an immortal republic of mankind. For as long as I live, I will fight for humanity and our freedom. Long live the revolution and let democracy reign!"

The assembly gave a standing ovation that lasted for two minutes. Alvin thought to himself that this entire revolution was a death filled horror. He just said what he thought would make the assembly happy, it was not what he really felt. What he really felt was that if it was that easy for Heinrich to finagle power, humanity was on a course of destruction. Democracy didn't exist anymore, the state ran every aspect of everyone's lives. The speech was a charade to save his life, a charade to guide humanity onto the right course.

Chapter 5:

The War to End All Wars

August 5th, 2035 9:30 AM

For Jack Briggs nothing good came of the revolution. The merchant fleets now operated under the communal ownership and the incentive for profit was gone. His lucrative enterprise of stealing from the fleets while working inconspicuously for them was over and had been for some

time. The communist government cracked down on piracy and started heavily monitoring the fleets, securing them with escorts of fighter ships. On Earth, he had to use his international credits discreetly or fear the repercussions of being caught hoarding wealth. A secret capitalist amongst the ranks of working class would be sniffed out and dealt with immediately. The punishment would be death.

This morning he thought to himself about how unsatisfactory his life was. Even with all the pleasantries and modern day conveniences the singularity brought, he felt unfulfilled. He grew up in a different time he thought as he sipped on whiskey and vaporized nicotine. When he was a kid, no one had wireheading technologies and infinite highs. Pleasure came in bursts and peaks, highs and lows. He didn't trust all of this technology, well except for some of it.

Facing an existential crisis, he made himself immortal but abstained from most pleasures. Not much of a lady's man, sometimes he would enjoy the company of a prostitute for a night. Is that all that's left to life he thought? He sipped whiskey and vaporized some more. What he wanted was something different. He wanted fame, glory and power. He yearned for recognition but saw no plausible way to make that a reality.

Slowly his ambitions and desires turned into vengeance and hatred. He hated humanity and what it stood for. He hated what civilization had become, to him it was something torn out of a page of Brave New World by Huxley and combined with George Orwell's 1984. It was a dystopian Utopia and life was a mess. Briggs's goal was to destroy humanity and become its harbinger.

That morning he devised a plan to smite humanity. Tomorrow, when he would work his shift for the merchant fleets, he would go missing with his ship. He would venture beyond the solar system and communicate with the Annunaki. His intentions were to start a war between the Annunaki and humanity anyway he could. This was his way of committing suicide he thought, by bringing down all of humanity.

Briggs had been spying on Alvin Reed on his days off from work from his home base in Georgia. Alvin had delegated most of the responsibility of government to Joseph and Alvin secluded himself in a private laboratory back at The Peak. There, in the laboratory, Alvin was designing a secret object which lay beyond view of the holographic screen cameras in that room. Briggs tracked every movement of Alvin's day in and day out, it became an obsession to him. Briggs had to have this secret object he thought. It must have been something revolutionary if it was held in such high regard.

He finished his fifth whiskey and his automated car drove to the train station. He had to know what was in that laboratory and he had a way to get in. Embedded in his clothing were nanoparticle threads which could bend and reshape light. With nanobots, he replicated stolen designs from the government owned Singularitarian labs and created a cloaking outfit. He boarded an early train to New York City and took a seat in one of the train cars.

On the way to New York City, he tested the design one last time. He walked up from his seat to the bathroom and took out his smartphone. He activated the nanofibers from a button embedded on his shirt. He turned invisible, but his smartphone was hanging in the air. He took a photo of

himself with a normal filter and an infrared filter. All light was redirected and he was invisible as he pulled a balaclava over his face. Tiny slits with cameras projected the outside world inside the balaclava, but left a tiny part of his face exposed.

You could only see two tiny dots, hanging mid air from the front side of the balaclava. To anyone looking it would seem like flies floating in the air. He took off the balaclava and disabled the cloaking device, proceeding to take his seat. He would arrive in New York in 2 hours by train.

From his seat, he took in the scenery from the window. At 600 miles per hour, the landscapes of Georgia and the southern states quickly faded into his memory. He thought about what he would do with this new technology and if he would give it to the Annunaki emperor. A good idea he thought, it was worth the risk considering he had nothing else to give anyway. The Annunaki emperor would want nothing of him and would probably dispose of him before starting a war with humanity.

The alcohol was blurring his vision and making him clumsy. Briggs knew that two more hours would make him tipsy but not drunk. When he worked, he was always a little tipsy. He found that he was more nimble and open to deception, this made theft easier. He was less worried about giving himself away and feigned responsibility, the perfect cover for a thief.

The ride was uneventful. Travelers at their stations embarked and disembarked, going about their business. At Penn Station in Manhattan, Jack disembarked and made his way to The Peak. Outside in the summer heat, the full body suit was beginning to make Jack sweat. The station was full of people unaware of Jack and his intentions. Jack hailed a taxi and arrived at The Peak fifteen minutes later.

He looked up the massive facade of the building for the first time. Its size humbled him. Somewhere in the building, Alvin Reed was working on something or holding a conference. Jack had to avoid Reed at all costs and escape the building with the secret tech quickly. The lobby was full of people busy, working and conversing. He made his way to the bathrooms in the lobby and hid in a stall.

He activated his cloaking suit and made his way for the lobby elevators. A giant group of people exited one elevator and no one entered. This was the perfect time for Jack to go in before anyone else got in. He hit the button for the twentieth floor, where this clandestine laboratory was and the elevator rose to the floor. At the twentieth floor, Briggs found himself in a long white hallway with doors leading to many rooms.

Nobody was in the hallway and the room he was looking for was the third door to the left in the hallway. He made his way to the room and there, in the middle of the room, was another compartmentalized room. He found it strange that in this highly secretive laboratory, no one was present either. It was almost as if Reed had laid a trap for Briggs, but Briggs was none the wiser. In the outer room was laboratory equipment, bins full of materials and nanobots. He made his way into the inner room and was greeted by the site of a large black anechoic chamber.

He grasped the handle to the chamber, opened it and inside were two items. There was a cube and a rod. The cube was transparent on all sides with glowing blue edges. Its vertices covered with adjoining rubberized plasmids. The plasmids held the cube in structure. The cube had a door on one side in the bottom of the cube with a convalescent blue button next to it. Visible from the transparent sides was a cool blue misty haze flowing inside the cube.

The rod was discrete and simple. It had a sphere at both ends which were filled with an electrolyzed gas. Briggs lifted both of the items without problem and stashed them in the inside of his coat. No one was in the laboratory or on the twentieth floor still. Briggs was still tipsy and made his way out of the building. He had decided that now was time to leave Earth and meet with the Annunaki, not tomorrow.

Alvin would soon find out that he had stolen this secret technology and find him. Briggs feared that the state would condemn him to death or to thousands of years imprisonment. He hailed for a taxi to Penn Station and boarded another train back to Temple, Georgia where his secret hideout was. Two hours had passed and he had arrived at his hideout. The rod once in the possession of the smuggler was designed to fall out and plant itself in the ground and split the Earth in two.

He took his ship out of his barn and went into his hideout to burn it down to the ground. The smuggler found himself in the shining heat of the sun running towards his personal space ship, with his home in flames behind him. The rod fell from his pocket while he was unaware but the cube remained in place. It planted itself in the ground as he made his way into the ship. A message relayed onto his flight navigation touchscreen. Alvin sent a encrypted and untraceable message.

“Fly through the core. The space fleets will be searching for you, you must avoid them for now. The war has started.”

Alvin had known about Briggs all along and had designated him to start the war with the Annunaki.

Baffled by the cryptic message the smuggler paused. Instantaneously, the ground shook. Rippling through Earth's crust, the device split the Earth in two. The ground fractured for thousands of miles in radius and the world was torn asunder. Tsunamis overtook large hard structure stabilization grids on the coasts of Earth. Magma bursted through the core and raced to Earth's surface.

Alvin was with his Lonna at The Peak. New York City had fractured and hundreds of thousands were in peril. The Peak collapsed and the two were sent tumbling down through cascading floors from the penthouse of The Peak. Each blow glancing and deflecting energy absorbed by Alvin and Lonna's personal energy field manipulator, a force field made of dark matter and sustained by nanobots.

Lonna's manipulator ran out of energy and the two were left on the bottom floor, with thousands dead in the building. They had landed in an area where the debris gave way to a clear sky rapidly

filling with smoke and dust, full of nanobots designed to rebuild after catastrophe. The ground had finally given way from the rod and the sky had been split apart. The void rapidly refilled with atmosphere and the smuggler had flown through the core. A rapidly ascending flow of magma surging from underground was ready to consume the Alvin, Lonna and the debris. Alvin was perched over a fissure while his wife, stuck in the fissure, held onto the ground supporting Alvin.

His wife screamed "Help! I can't hold on much longer!"

She was holding on for dear life, her nanobots exhausting all of their energy to augment her with strength. Alvin's nanobots, strained from over use, augmented him with strength to pull her from doom. The zero energy point field acquiesced the energy from the vacuum to re establish a force field around Alvin. His field re emerged as he pulled his love into it with all of his strength and the two rode out a wave of magma into lower Manhattan. The War to End All Wars had begun.

In the dust that had settled, Alvin and Lonna found themselves a block down the street from where The Peak formerly was. Buildings had collapsed and the helpless were traversing the fractured ground seeking help and assistance. Androids were running back and forth between buildings carrying the dead and injured. From Alvin's smart watch, a holographic prompt to accept a conversation appeared. It was Joseph.

"It was the Annunaki wasn't it Alvin? There's no way that couldn't have been them. This was a massive attack." Said Joseph

Alvin had to lie to Joseph to succeed with his plan of starting a war with the Annunaki.

"Yes, it was them. The Peak is utterly destroyed and most of the East Coast here is probably in ruins. We need to retaliate immediately." Said Alvin

"The problem is Alvin none of their ships have been in the vicinity of Earth for years. How could it be them? They must have laid a trap for us and are coming for us this very moment." Said Joseph

"I am authorizing you full command to position the Space Corps fleet outside of Earth's atmosphere to engage the Annunaki. Once this is all settled, Lonna and I are going to meet you in London to monitor the situation." Said Alvin

"Understood Alvin. I will initiate those orders immediately and we will setup air defense brigades across the planet to assist in the fighting. Make sure you stay safe, no one knows what the Annunaki are capable of doing now." Said Joseph

"Joseph, one last thing. Get Lonna and I out of here. We need a VTOL craft that can get here quickly and land in the city. You'll have my coordinates as I move about trying to help people in the wreckage." Said Alvin

"Understood Alvin. We will send a craft immediately." Said Joseph

For now, Alvin and Lonna had to rescue the dying people in the streets. Briggs meanwhile, was far from home. His ship while accelerating past lightspeed and emerging from the wormhole networks was caught by an Annunaki scout ship. Briggs was detained and questioned by Annunaki subordinates. Once he had revealed his true motives, he was brought directly to the Annunaki emperor via the wormhole network.

At the Annunaki emperor's palace, the main corridor to the throne was ornate. It was trimmed in gold and marble, reminiscent of a baroque palace from Earth. Two columns of Annunaki soldiers armed with polearms stood guarding the emperor's throne. The emperor sat there, in the guise of a human awaiting Briggs. Two soldiers flanked Briggs as they brought him to the emperor. His clothes smelled of gasoline, unclean from the burning down of his home. The emperor eyed Briggs up and down, inspecting him. The emperor and his soldiers were dressed in red satin togas embroidered with gold.

"What brings you here human? From what we have seen of your Earth, all seems well. It seems you have been following our commands." Said the emperor

Briggs frowned and tears came to his eyes, realizing he had felt guilt about what he was going to do.

"All is not well emperor. Mankind has deceived you. They are seeking to rearm and destroy you and your race," said Briggs.

"Is that right traveler? Who are you? Why are you here?" Said the emperor

"I was once a thriving thief. The humans have formed a new government with the intent of destroying the free market and running the planets affairs under a centralized state. I can no longer be anyone of value, the thrill of my life's adventures are laid to waste." Said the smuggler

"So you seek fortune with us then? Perhaps a leadership position after we take over Earth for good?" Said the emperor

"Yes. I want Earth completely destroyed. I have come to hate it and everything humanity has stood for. I have something for you, a gift from Alvin Reed. It is a highly coveted technology I have stolen." Said Briggs

The space smuggler reached into his jacket and revealed the cube. Its functions to him still unknown. The emperor reached out to the smuggler and took the cube from the smuggler's hand. He inspected it for a while. It was a short length of time, a minute or two; the emperor seemed puzzled.

"Do you know of the cube's functions traveler?" Asked the emperor.

"No." Briggs replied.

The emperor pressed the button and the door opened. The blue mist remained in the cube and now stopped flowing. The blue mist now aligned in a cubic lattice structure. The emperor threw the cube on the floor once he had realized what was happening.

“No! It’s a trap! Damn you human!” exclaimed the Annunaki emperor.

Through the quantum relays a message permeated through the fabric of space and time back to Earth and released the energy of the cube. A resonance cascade of black holes began to build up in the cube. At first the Emperor, the smuggler and the emperor's consorts were devoured. The fabric of space and time warped under the stress of instantaneous collapse to the singularity of mass and energy. Their bodies stretched infinitesimally towards the point. In less than a picosecond the air was pulled from their lungs as the immense negative vacuum pressure drew their bodies out into the newly formed singularity. The cube had fused all of its energy and the surrounding mass into a supermassive black hole rapidly accruing mass.

The entire homebase of the Annunaki empire had collapsed into a single point. Alvin's plan to start a war had succeeded. The Annunaki, in complete disarray without a leader, independently mobilized their forces to converge on Earth. Fleets disengaged in their patrols of the sectors of the galaxy and disengaged fighting with the Draconians and Android Grays. The Annunaki’s full four million ship fleet quickly traveled through the galaxy’s wormhole networks to emerge at the edge of the solar system.

As the fleets entered the solar system, alarms and sirens rang across Earth. Alvin was still stuck in New York City waiting for evacuation to London. Sheltering in a coffee shop in downtown Manhattan, Joseph popped up as a hologram from Alvin's smart watch.

“Alvin. We don't have time to debate this, but I am assuming full control of Earth's fleets and commanding the Space Corps to engage with the Annunaki. We have Invictus searching for the Grays and Draconians. There's no way we can defeat the Annunaki by ourselves.” Said Joseph

“Ok Joseph. Do it. We have no other options.” Said Alvin

In the Political Bureau war room, Invictus had connected himself to the Annunaki communications grid. From the grid he broadcasted messages down the quantum relay lines to the Draconian and Android Gray fleets. Invictus generated a cgi video of himself relaying this message:

“The Annunaki are concentrated around Earth. Humanity asks of your help. Our existence may be unknown to you, but we are a prominent race in this galaxy. Our space fleet numbers one hundred million ships and we have anti space defenses on Earth. If you come to defend us, we can defeat the Annunaki once and for all.”

In Zeta Reticuli, the home star system of the Android Grays the message was received. In Androsia, the far off solar system of the Draconians the message was received as well. The leaders of both races decided that now was the time to strike. With a combined force of 250 million ships, albeit of inferior quality, they concluded that the three races could successfully

take down the Annunaki together. In their respective star systems, massive wormholes had been connected to the wormhole network to travel to Earth's solar system. Within five minutes of receiving humanity's message, the race formed an alliance to take down their common enemy.

The Draconian leader introduced himself to Invictus. He had an android Gray assistant translate the Draconian language for him.

“I am Yaolath, leader of the Draconians. We will fight with humanity to stop the Annunaki.”

Next, the Android Gray leader introduced himself.

“I am Verus, leader of the Android Grays. We shall arrive shortly to fight with humanity.”

Invictus relayed the messages to Joseph Bradley, who was standing behind him in the war room. Over the skies of Earth, the Space Corps assembled into million ship formations. The Annunaki would arrive at Earth within minutes and anti-space weaponry was deployed across the planet. The guns tracked the sky looking for dreadnoughts and fighter ships. Joseph relayed a message across the planet to every device capable of receiving it.

“Humans of Earth, these may be our final hours. The Annunaki have come again and declared war on humanity. We are ready to fight once more with the help of the Draconians and Android Grays. I call upon every man, woman and child to arms to defend Earth. Mankind was defeated by the Annunaki once and it shall not happen again.”

From the war room, Joseph stood in front of a large panoramic holographic screen. Analysts and androids monitored the situation across the planet. Commanders of the global military issued orders while Joseph watched and delegated responsibility to them. The best fighters of the revolution were now entrusted to win a battle with mankind's greatest enemy. The Annunaki's military was now in Earth orbit.

Behind them, the two other races had converged for an ambush. A communist general asked Joseph

“Do we have permission to engage, Chairman Bradley?”

Joseph replied “Permission granted. Give those motherfuckers hell.”

Sending his instructions to the subordinate commanders of the Space Corps, the fleets flew out of the atmosphere into the direct firing line of the Annunaki. The Annunaki Dreadnoughts launched brigades of smaller attack vehicles and the humans engaged in dog fighting combat. Anti space guns on Earth trained their sights on the large dreadnoughts, tearing apart their ships. The anti space guns launched massive nuclear bombs launched on magnetic rails propelling the bombs deep into the core of the dreadnoughts. Both sides had dark matter available to them in use for their ships, but use of zero point energy fields would cause a stalemate on both sides. If these fields were activated, no projectiles or lasers could penetrate the fields. Every faction in this war was vulnerable and taking critical losses.

The superiority of the Annunaki space fleet was taking a toll on the humans. In the first fifteen minutes of engagement, every Annunaki ship managed to destroy at least ten human ships almost immediately. Pincered, the Annunaki decided to send half of their fleet behind their formations to face the Draconians and Grays. After twenty minutes, the humans had lost 50% of their ships and the two other races the same amount. The Annunaki numbered around one million ships remaining, many of them dreadnoughts with auxiliary weapons and ships within them.

Across Earth, human ships were falling out of the sky, crashing down into the seas and continents. Pilots ejected out of their ships after entering at terminal velocity at a safe height in the atmosphere. Some of those men and women would be stuck out at sea, left to die without hope of ever being rescued in time. Invictus and the androids across Earth were becoming overloaded with transmissions trying to disarm the Annunaki fleets.

The three races had encircled the Annunaki and were now closing in on the massive Dreadnoughts. The Grays and Draconians had lost 60% of their ships and were making a desperate attempt to cut the head off the invasion. In the center of the Annunaki fleet, was a massive dreadnought with all of the Annunaki's military commanders directing the fleet. Fifty nuclear bombs penetrated the hull of the Dreadnought but it was still in operation, desperately trying to repair with nanobots. The Draconians sent infantry ships to board and command the dreadnought by landing in its hangar bay in the aft end of the ship.

Alvin, watching a live feed from the communist military was enjoying a cappuccino. To him, the potential downfall and enslavement of humanity seemed to be spectacle. He was distant from the fighting and viewed it as a game. This thought came to Alvin and he rebuked himself for it. The harsh reality was that millions were sacrificing their lives again, but this time, the war was his fault.

Sirens blared in Manhattan as the city began the recovery process. The upswelled ground had come to rest but many buildings in the city had collapsed. While a battle was happening in outer space, a five thousand mile area around the American east coast was pushed to the breaking point trying to survive. Alvin's escort would take another two hours to get there traveling at supersonic speeds. He sipped his coffee and looked at his wife, sitting across the table from him. She looked miserable and she had said that desperately wanted to be home, doing something other than worrying about if she was going to die in the next few hours.

In outer space, the fighting was still intense. Anti-space gun barrages from Earth intersected the flight paths of communist ships and some friendly fire occurred. Even the best flight guidance systems and targeting systems failed due to human error. The Draconian plan to board the main Annunaki dreadnought failed. Once in the hangar bay, Annunaki troops barricaded the hangar entrances into the main ship and fired on the Draconian infantry.

Joseph Bradley was becoming nervous over the course of the battle. He hastily ordered a salvo of all of Earth's missile and nuclear weapons systems in order to take down the main Dreadnought and its auxiliary fleet ships. Across Earth, missiles fired from bases and ships out at sea towards the main Dreadnought. Payloads of conventional bombs and nuclear bombs aimed for select

targets. Many of them were not shot down as the Annunaki were engaged in dog fighting with the three races.

This final barrage was the end of the main dreadnought. Its main power systems overloaded and the ship was full of holes. The Annunaki commanders were presumed to be dead and the ship came barreling towards Earth. The communist ships flew out of the way of the falling Dreadnought and it made its way for the Gulf of Mexico. The hundred mile long ship was disintegrating in the atmosphere and accelerating towards the gulf.

The dreadnought pilots, in a desperate attempt to save themselves, slowed their descension into the ocean with what remaining power systems they had available in the dreadnought. It landed in the middle of the gulf and submerged into the ocean. Near the shores of the gulf, it became stuck in the shallow waters. The giant alien ship stuck out of the water, like a monument of the war taking place. Like dropping a boulder in a lake, tsunami size waves rippled across the gulf towards the shore. Already fractured from the secret rod and pummeled by waves, another set of waves hit the coastline and drowned the cities on the coast again. Luckily, seventy foot tall hard structure stabilization sea walls had been built around the coasts of every coastline on Earth. The storm surge, while significant, did not catastrophically destroy the gulf coastline. Across the area, emergency services were scrambling to save people and rescue them from the tsunami. Joseph's actions to shoot down the main Dreadnought had not been relayed to the rest of the planet and the gulf coast suffered for it.

Once he had found out where the ship had landed, he ordered nearby military units to converge on the beaches of New Orleans. Only five hundred soldiers could be gathered quickly and they set up machine gun nests on the beach. A steady stream of soldiers would be coming soon, but the soldiers were going to be overwhelmed if backup did not come quickly. As the soldiers had finished setting up, survivors from the crash began pouring out of the ship. The stabilization grid around the coast was lowered to allow the soldiers to fire on the survivors. There was one hundred thousand Annunaki on that ship initially, but now only ten thousand remained alive.

The machine gun nests unloaded on the survivors. The survivors were hopelessly irradiated and crippled from the sustained attacks on their ship. The top portion of the ship which peaked out of the water was on fire. Billowing smoke filled the sky as the survivors jumped from the ship into the ocean. Bullets darted through the water, leaving behind vacuous trails of bubbles as they hit and missed their targets.

Despite the supremacy of the communist state, not every soldier was armed with the latest weaponry. Decades old conventional weaponry was still used across the planet to maintain order in cities. This fact did not matter much because the Annunaki were not well armored anyway. Most of the kills in this group of survivors were Annunaki service members with no direct combat role. They had small side arms but had no hope of defending themselves while swimming to shore.

The troops started firing rockets into the sea to blow up groups of survivors. This was effective at taking out large portions of those swimming to shore. The sound of the roaring machine guns was deafening and the bodies of the Annunaki floated to the surface. The ocean was quickly

filling with blood and leaking radioactive particles into the environment. Within minutes, the survivors from the main Annunaki dreadnought were killed. In the sky above, the battle for Earth continued as ships from all races were shot out of the sky and fell towards Earth.

Without commanders, the rest of the Annunaki fleet dwindled under coordinated fire from the remaining ships of the three races. The Annunaki numbered five hundred thousand while the two alien races had less than 5% of their total ships left. The humans had around 35% of their ships remaining. In a desperate attempt to subdue the Annunaki, the Gray Androids abandoned their ships and fled in escape pods. The sheer immensity of fighter space planes were programmed to fly kamikaze style into the remaining Annunaki Dreadnoughts, with hopes of bringing them down. The Androids had Dreadnought class ships of their own and the escape pods managed to flee to those ships.

This maneuver brought down fifty of the final hundred dreadnoughts and decommissioned twenty more. The remaining thirty were fired upon from Earth's anti space gun batteries in synchronization. One by one, the massive Dreadnoughts fell to Earth. Most of them landed in the middle of Earth's oceans but one managed to hit the bustling metropolis of Kuala Lumpur. Again, the Annunaki slowed their descent but this was not enough to save the city and the surrounding areas. The city became nothing more than a giant crater with half of the pulverized Dreadnought sticking out of the ground.

All that was left of the Annunaki fleets were midclass size ships and fighter spaceships. The Draconians had fully expended their fleets and were eliminated. The Androids had few fighter space planes left and most of the work was left to the human Space Corps.

Alvin was still in the coffee shop, hunkering down waiting for instruction from Joseph. Joseph was unable to say anything to Alvin under the intense stress of the battle. Lonna watched the live feed of the fighting with Alvin.

Alvin had a front row seat to everything. The live feed had video streaming in from fighter planes, Earth's air defense batteries and the larger midclass ships of Earth's Space Corps. The only thing he was left clueless about were the Annunaki Dreadnoughts that had crashed into Earth. He switched back and forth from the communist news network to follow updates on what the military was doing about those ships and their survivors. Joseph Bradley had authorized the infantry and navy to kill any remaining Annunaki survivors, Alvin found out from the news headlines.

The caffeine from the amount of coffee Alvin drank was making him jittery and nervous. He felt as if he had the energy to go out there and fight the Annunaki himself. In reality, he knew that the real heroes were out there in space and fighting on the ground. He was nothing in this war but a catalyst. He began thinking about the ramifications of an Annunaki defeat and what it meant for Earth. Perhaps humanity would become an empire and fill the Annunaki's role in the galaxy.

He then had a sobering realization. The Annunaki emperor had mentioned that they had controlled the entire universe. Was this fleet all of their ships? He rationalized that perhaps that statement was deceitful and its intent was to control humanity. The entire universe was a big place and surely not just one race could control it all.

Alvin knew that the truth would come to light after the war with the Annunaki was over. The other races surely knew the breadth of the Annunaki's domain and if they truly controlled the entire universe. The thought came and left his mind quickly as he watched the fighting on his phone.

The fighting in space was winding down and looked surely to be a victory for humanity. The remaining spaceships that Earth possessed targeted and picked off isolated Annunaki fighters. Larger mid class ships began surrendering but Joseph's order was to destroy every Annunaki ship in Earth orbit. After the course of an hour, the battle in space was won. All of the races had suffered great casualties and Earth gained a pyrrhic victory.

The manpower and materiel lost in the battle was staggering. What took humanity five years to assemble and create was destroyed in one hour. Some of the ships's residual materials could be salvaged with space drones but once again, Earth's population was reduced by almost a billion lives. Thirty million Space Corps ships remained in space orbit waiting for commands from the communist government.

Joseph contacted Alvin in the coffee shop. "Alvin, I'm going to command the fleets to come back to Earth to rearm with nuclear weapons to finish the Annunaki off once and for all. The Draconian and Android Gray leaders have given us a galactic map of their homeworlds and territories. Once we finish rearmament, we are going into the wormhole network they created and we will bomb their planets.

We are in dire need of auxiliary support so I have commanded whatever merchant fleet ships are in the vicinity of Earth to come along as well. We'll be flying by these planets quickly to avoid their terrestrial defenses and committing to an all out carpet bombing attack on each of the planets. I don't care what you want now Alvin, I'm in control since I'm closest in proximity to the communist military command."

Alvin reluctantly accepted Joseph's plan and sighed. He then said,

"Do remember that once I'm back in London, I am the General Secretary. I'm the one who makes those executive decisions."

Joseph looked at Alvin sternly with a straight face and said,

"Understood Alvin. This had to be done. We can't risk Earth and the fate of the other races. The Annunaki will surely retaliate given enough time. I'm signing off, there are critical matters to attend to."

On Alvin's phone, Joseph sent him the galactic map of Annunaki worlds. It was an image of Milky Way, which was three dimensional and interactable. In the bottom left corner of the image there were vital statistics about the Annunaki. They had twenty thousand planets which they had colonized and terraformed for their race. Each planet had ten billion inhabitants, a galactic maximum which was enforced to prevent resource exhaustion. The Annunaki had exhausted

most of the resources around their planets and had ventured into vast numbers of star systems to acquire more.

The map also showed statistics about the other two races. Their numbers were far smaller than the Annunaki. Combined together their planets numbered fifteen thousand and they showed signs of resource depletion as well. From a top down perspective on the phone application, the Annunaki had five main galactic hubs in the galaxy. They had a cluster of planets in the four quadrants of the galaxy. In the center, a giant interconnected grid of planets fed off of the supermassive black hole's energy for energy production.

The Draconians were in the northern quadrants and the Android Grays the southern quadrants. Earth itself, was in the middle of the lower left quadrant. Alvin wondered why the races had not been contacted before and why this information wasn't shared earlier. Alvin thought that it wasn't a necessity before and now would be the perfect time to establish relations with the Draconians and Android Grays.

It amazed Alvin to think of humanity's capacity in fighting the Annunaki, an ancient and powerful race. As a physicist, this fact gave him the grim idea that the Annunaki and humanity were not that far apart. Once a civilization had reached a critical point in terms of technological progress, any further developments would provide steeper diminishing returns. The singularity mankind had experienced was far closer to the destiny of humanity than any phase of progress in human history. Only so much could be done even after the discovery of new physics and technologies.

Alvin looked at this map for any signs of other life forms across the galaxy. This map, was a compendium of millions if not billions of years of information compiled by the Annunaki, the former Reptilians, the Draconians and the Android Grays. There were too many star systems to search, too many exoplanets to learn about. It seemed clear from the map that besides the three remaining races, there was no other sentient life in the galaxy. Also on the map were the locations of the wormholes the Annunaki used to move across the galaxy.

There were too many wormholes to count. Almost every solar system in the galaxy was connected to one another in a massive labyrinthian design. Alvin thought of the immensity of dark energy required to sustain these black holes indefinitely. Perhaps due to the sheer amount of it in the galaxy the network was sustainable for long periods of time. Many questions remained about the Annunaki's full breadth of knowledge and capabilities and Alvin was getting tired of this war.

He was unsure of what to do in the aftermath of the war. He told Lonna to come with him to St. Patrick's Cathedral a short walk away from the coffee shop. Miraculously, by coincidence or the grace of God, the church had been untouched by the Earth splitting rod. Alvin, once a Catholic, sought the wisdom of the priests within its halls. The tympanum outside the basilica had images of God casting Lucifer down from heaven. Inside the atmosphere was solemn. Mass was not being held for the day and candles were lit under the paintings of Christ's trials. It smelled of frankincense and a coating of fresh paint. The pews had been removed and pushed to the sides to make room for the wounded in New York City.

Alvin walked down the central aisle to see a priest studying from a large latin bible underneath a foreboding Christ on the cross. The sculpture of Christ, emaciated and gaunt, was looking to his left while his body hung and drooped. Alvin felt awed by the size of the Christ and how the cross seemed to float in air; a subtle illusion on strings. The priest was unphased by Alvin's presence, he was too busy studying the good word of the Lord. The candlelight flickered as Alvin looked upon him.

Without looking up from the pages the priest spoke.

"What brings you here my son? What do you ask of Father Anthony? Do you seek consolation or the wisdom of our savior?"

The priest turned a page in the bible and Alvin spoke to him.

"I am here in dire straits. I have come to you in secret father to ask for guidance in the pursuit of truth. Humanity has slain the Annunaki emperor and the empire's dominion has collapsed. Do we become an empire ourselves and claim the Annunaki's former dominion?"

The priest glanced back up at Alvin. He placed a bookmark in the giant Bible and closed it. The book was gleaming in the candlelight projected from adjacent candles and had a leather texture free of dust.

"You ask a man of peace whether or not we should subject others to force? It seems unfortunate these are the circumstances humanity has been placed in, but, if you require my guidance I will interject. You are cautious and fair my son and have listened to the many words of history's wisest. Why is it now that you come to ask a lowly priest about the fate of humanity?"

Tears began to well up in Alvin's eyes and he struggled to not cry. His voice became weak and low.

"Because father, I am lost. I am unsure of everything that I've done for humanity and what has happened to it. Maybe you might have something to tell me, from Christ's teachings that can redeem my actions. Maybe Christ's teachings can guide my actions."

Alvin had dropped his faith in Christ long ago as a teenager. He merely sought comfort from a story not unlike his own. He thought that he too, would sacrifice himself to save humanity. Alvin loved life dearly, but he foresaw a future of war with the Draconians and Android Grays. He could not sacrifice so many lives as he did today without fighting for mankind.

The priest sighed and looked at Alvin. He walked from behind the podium and gave him a blessing. He put his hands on Alvin's face and said

"Christ would redeem the Annunaki, not destroy them Alvin. But remember, he is our saviour, not you. Before Christ returns we must all make choices and commit sins which we may not

want to do. Remember this and weigh your sins against the good you have done for humanity. All will be forgiven if you repent.”

Alvin took Father Anthony’s hands off of his face and said

“I’m sorry Father, I cannot repent because I do not believe in the faith anymore. Thank you for your guidance. I have to leave for London. Your words will ring in my mind.”

“Before you leave Alvin, let me say to you some words Christ said. He said those who live by the sword will die by the sword. You should let peace guide your heart in the future and find a way to let humanity prosper without war.” said Father Anthony.

Despite Alvin's denial of Christ, Father Anthony blessed him again anyway. He wished him well and Alvin left the church with Lonna. They made their way for a heliport on the south side of Manhattan, near Battery Park. As they walked towards Downtown, they looked upon the city that was once again in ruins. Skyscrapers had collapsed, roads were blocked and millions in the city were suffering. It took them an hour to navigate the densely packed streets of survivors looking for assistance. By the time they had arrived to the seaport, the communist military had arrived with ships to supply the city with food, materials, nanobots and other necessities.

The VTOL aircraft had triangulated Alvin's position and landed in the seaport to evacuate him and Lonna to London. Departing Manhattan, the extent of the damage done by the Earth splitting rod became evident. Clouds of smoke from the cities across the Hudson River filled the skies and the streets were gridlocked with people. Alvin pictured in his mind a similar situation was occurring across the entire eastern seaboard of the former United States.

In the back of the VTOL craft, Alvin and Lonna were alone. He sat across from her and looked her in the eyes.

“Lonna, I have to admit something. I caused the devastation you're seeing. The Annunaki didn't start the war. I did.” Said Alvin.

Lonna’s eyes widened and she yelled “Are you kidding me? Why would you do this Alvin? Do you know how many people died because of you?”

Alvin thought about his conversation with Father Anthony and the guilt was building up inside of him. He started crying. He then said,

“I had to do it Lonna! We couldn't give the Annunaki any more time to prepare another invasion! The Political Bureau never would have approved of going to war with the Annunaki. Because of the Annunaki, humanity’s full potential couldn't be realized. Those people didn't die for nothing Lonna!”

Lonna crossed her arms and looked out of the window of the VTOL craft. By now, the craft was hastily cruising above the Atlantic Ocean.

“Are you going to tell Joseph, Alvin? He needs to be relieved of the fact that he didn't send off Earth's people to die in vain. He needs to know the truth, that while he was commanding in your absence, this war was entirely your fault. I think you're a psychopath Alvin. You have no remorse for anyone and care about nothing besides your accomplishments in life. What was the point in starting such a costly war? If it was to unlock humanity's full potential, then the war was pointless. You surely must have some better reason than that.” Said Lonna

Alvin struggled to come up with a better answer. He mimicked Lonna and looked out the window as well. He was hoping to find an answer looking at the ocean and one came to him.

“There is another reason. If the Annunaki invaded again they might have enslaved all of us or destroyed us. War was inevitable anyway Lonna.”

Lonna looked at him and squinted her eyes as to mockingly deride him as she said

“That's not a good enough answer for splitting the Earth in half and killing a few hundred million more people than that needed to die. You should be ashamed of yourself. Don't you have some sort of moral fiber in you? It seems like since you've gotten all this power you've forgotten that you're still human, you're still fallible. It's not up to you to decide who gets to live and who dies a frivolous death. Your job as General Secretary was to unite humanity and prevent war, not stage a false flag attack to preempt a war with the Annunaki.”

“A smuggler was watching me. I knew what he wanted to do. His intention was to go to the Annunaki emperor and reveal humanity's plans himself. His name was Jack Briggs. I sacrificed him to kill the Annunaki emperor and destroy their homeworld. By doing that, I could ensure the full retaliation of the Annunaki. I could ensure they would send their entire fleet here to come stop us. I effectively ended the only threat to humanity and possibly saved more lives than were lost. Doesn't that count for something?”

Lonna put her face in her hands and started crying. She then said

“How many secrets were you keeping from me Alvin? Why are you doing this? How did you manage to kill the emperor? You're not only destroying our planet but you're going to destroy our marriage. The next thing I find out will probably be that you have cheated on me with many women and use me as a crutch to rely on.”

“Look Lonna, I'm not cheating on you. Concerning the emperor, I found out a way to harness zero point energy to condense space and time around a single point to create a series of black holes. It was a device in the shape of a cube. I'm sorry Lonna, I should have never even have brought this up.” Said Alvin

The two remained silent for the rest of the flight back to London. Lonna remained upset at Alvin and Alvin felt ashamed of himself. In the sky, they saw Earth's fleets flying back down to rearm and finish the war with Annunaki. Two hours later, they arrived in London and made their way to the Political Bureau. In the city, conscripts and aid personnel were moving to the city's ports to

aid the Americas after the false flag attack. Lonna left Alvin to rest at their apartment in Millharbour while Alvin went to the Political Bureau's war room to relieve Joseph of his duties.

Alvin hoped this would be the last time he would ever step in this room and that humanity would never be involved in a war again. In front of the panoramic screen of the war room, Joseph was sitting in the main commander's chair. He looked exhausted, his eyes were baggy and he could barely keep awake. Military commanders flanked Joseph on the left and right and Invictus was in a chair in front of him, monitoring the Annunaki worlds on his desk's holographic screen.

Joseph saw Alvin as he entered the room and spoke to him.

"The fleets have arrived back on Earth, Alvin. They're being armed as we speak and shall be leaving for the Annunaki worlds across the galaxy soon. I presumed you looked at that map I sent you. We risk losing our entire fleet in this operation and we are left critically exposed. Thankfully, our ships should be able to bomb from high enough orbit and at a fast enough speed to avoid the Annunaki space defenses.

The ships have been loaded with dozens of extra warheads and conventional bombs to provide a distraction for the Annunaki. They can't possibly shoot down so many warheads."

Alvin looked at the panoramic screen to see the status of the rearmament and statistics from the battle. He then looked at Joseph and said

"Good work Joseph. You proved to be a valiant commander in these trying times. At the end of all this, we'll have a parade and a party. You'll receive the highest commendations along with the survivors of this war for your service to our planet. It's not time to celebrate yet, but I am here to relieve you of your duties."

Joseph sat back in his chair and let out a sigh of relief. He put his hands behind his head and said

"You don't know how stressful these last few hours have been. Everyone has been working overtime to insure we all didn't get wiped out. Too many people died today and in the last few years that have gone by. I'm beginning to wonder if that's the price we have to pay for living in such a technologically advanced galaxy."

Alvin gave Joseph a tilted smile and said

"I hope we never go to war again. To go to war is never the right thing to do but at certain times it is inevitable. Earth has had millennia of bloodshed and violence, it's time to end that Joseph."

"I think you're being too optimistic Alvin. We will always need soldiers to fight. The Draconians and Android Grays may have lost their entire fleets but it won't be long until they rebuild. Well, not unless we do something about it. I think we should enforce our dominance over the galaxy while we still have time. We have to prevent war by becoming the strongest." Said Joseph

"I agree Joseph. Take some rest for today. If we need you we will notify you." Said Alvin

“The modafinil I took earlier to stay awake is wearing off. I'll see you soon Alvin. I will check back with the bureau after I take a nap at home. If you need me to come back I will.” Said Joseph

Joseph got out of the chair and shook Alvin's hand. Alvin sat in the chair and was now in command of the fleets. His first orders were to be updated on the status of the fleets and the support headed to the Americas. Alvin initiated the order to send the fleets off into the wormholes and to scour the galaxy for Annunaki worlds. Across the planet, the fleets began mobilizing.

The fleets took off for the wormholes at the far end of the solar system. They used their dark matter and fusion drives to propel the ships faster than light to get to the wormholes. At the end of the solar system, the five wormholes were still open. Maintaining these wormholes were megastellar sized accretions of dark matter and conventional matter. The creation of this intergalactic network of wormholes was a gargantuan feat of engineering. Faster than light vessels must have worked tirelessly eons ago to move so much matter into place. Humanity in the twentieth century discovered these wormholes and kept them a secret from the rest of the population.

The thirty million ship fleet split into five sub fleets and headed off into the galaxy. In the wormholes, time and space distorted immensely. A chasm of light bent and warped on the wormhole walls. The journey to the respective quadrants and center of the galaxy took five minutes. At the other ends of the wormholes, the fleets then split into ten one hundred thousand ship sized subfleets.

The space fleet commanders synchronized their ships to effectively route the quadrants, minimizing time spent. On the holographic screens of the ships, the onboard AI system routed the Annunaki planets with nodes and edges leading to the planets. The coordinated destruction of the Annunaki worlds had commenced. The fleets orbited the planets and performed evasive maneuvers to avoid anti-space gun fire. Gigaton payload nuclear bombs pummelled the planets from all angles hitting every square inch of the planets.

The ships in each quadrant and the galactic center moved from planet to planet wreaking havoc. Billions of Annunaki were exterminated in the first half hour. As the ships expended their payloads they moved faster towards the next planet. On each ship's intergalactic map, the planets turned red to signify that they had been bombed. Alvin watched the extent of the campaign from inside the Political Bureau's war room.

He sat in his chair amazed by how far humanity had come in the last five years. The Annunaki once a formidable enemy, had now become weak and destitute. The campaign continued on for another three hours and the entirety of the Annunaki race were wiped out completely. If any survived the bombings, their planet would become irradiated for thousands of years due to the use of different radioactive material. Alvin pushed on a swivel latch on his desk to reveal a screen with camera and microphone on it.

He broadcasted a message to the fleets and said

“You have done good work soldiers. Now that the Annunaki are gone, you can come home as heroes. The war is over. You have won.”

Alvin got out of his chair and yelled

“We did it! We beat the Annunaki! The war is over!”

The war room bursted into celebration. Analysts and soldiers gave each other hugs. Alvin ordered an analyst to bring bottles of champagne into the room to celebrate the victory. The news quickly broke that the war was won and it was broadcasted across the planet. In the war room, the leaders of the other races came onto the panoramic screen.

An intermediate android was standing by to translate for Yaolath and Verus needed no translator. Alvin sat back in his chair and the assistants in the room did as well. The atmosphere was tense as bottles of champagne were brought into the room. Now started a phase of diplomacy, to determine who would get what in a post-Annunaki galaxy.

“Greetings leaders. The war is finally over and we must enter discussions about what to do after this victory,” said Alvin.

Yaolath was sitting in a room full of Draconians, staring at the camera in front of them. Verus was flanked by Android Grays. Yaolath spoke in Draconian and as he spoke his forked tongue trashed about. After he was finished speaking, his android assistant spoke.

“Yaolath says that his fleets are completely destroyed and his people are vulnerable. He wishes that mankind does not destroy the Draconians and he asks for peace. He will allow humanity to subjugate the Draconians if humanity imposes less restrictive terms than the Annunaki.”

Verus then took his turn to speak.

“We agree with Yaolath, we are in no position to fight the remaining Earth fleet. We ask for peace and will become vassals to the human race in exchange for mercy. We risked everything to save humanity. The least you owe us is the dignity of peace.”

Alvin had clear intentions in these diplomatic matters. Humanity had to prosper at all costs, humanity was first.

“We agree that peace is the best solution for our people and for your races. But, here are our terms. We want constant surveillance of the two races and a commitment to demilitarization. We will be sending some of our ships to watch you. Envoys will be sent to your planet for permanent surveillance. What we did with the Annunaki will not be the case with your races. The Annunaki were foolhardy to underestimate the power of mankind. You will also cease population of the galaxy. You will stay committed to your current homeworlds and colonies. You will only be permitted to leave your colonies under express supervision. We will gather resources for your subsistence.

Do you two accept these terms?”

The Draconians broke out into an immediate discussion in their foreign language and the Grays began speaking to each other as well.

After a few minutes of deliberation, Yaloath spoke through his android.

“We begrudgingly accept these terms. We feel betrayed by your kind Alvin. We came to save you and you do this to us. What can we do? We have no choice.”

Verus spoke next.

“We also accept these terms but not without much frustration and disappointment.”

Alvin wanted to make his point clear and spoke one last time

“If either of you choose to betray humanity, you will be utterly annihilated.”

Chapter 6: Paradise

July 1st, 2045

It had been fifteen years since mankind emerged from the technological singularity. Across the galaxy, war had become a relic of the past. Humanity was reeling from the devastating casualties

it sustained in a revolution and galactic war. Earth's population was now 5 billion people. A new generation had been born into a world without extensive suffering, disease, death and decay. Earth had become paradise. Under the auspices of Alvin Reed, the now galactic communist government ruled justly and democratically. Abundance permeated the planet and no social stratification existed. It was not Utopia, but close to it. In Syria, an archaeological team had discovered a relic from the Annunaki. Alvin was informed of the discovery and kept uninformed about its content until he arrived in modern day Iraq to see the discovery for himself.

He arrived from London early in the morning to see the discovery. At Tell Abu Hureyra, on the banks of the Euphrates was the archaeological site. Alvin landed there on his day off from work in secret to see the discovery. The discovery was made known only to the Political Bureau for security purposes. The nanobots which surveyed the Earth twelve years ago had missed this artifact. A sand storm was brewing as Alvin had come in. In the dense sandstorm, he quickly made his way into the neolithic village.

The village was excavated in the 1970s but a recent probe by archaeologists using excavating nanobots led to the discovery of an Annunaki stele. Around the ruins of a former hut, the excavation teams had set up tarps and tents. Guarding the tents were two soldiers with machine guns. Alvin made his way into the tent to see the discovery. Inside the tent, a team of archaeologists was waiting for Alvin. The stele was two feet tall and one foot wide.

On it were images of winged creatures which looked like human angels. These angels flanked an image of a woman nursing a baby and an ape looking creature. The woman with the baby and the ape were in the center of the stele. The angel on the right was reaching out towards the ape and the angel on the left was reaching out towards the baby. Under these engravings was an inscription in an alien language. The inscription, when deciphered by an AI read

“We have given birth to you, mankind. May you prosper. We were the first in this galaxy to come to sentience. We created the intelligent beings of this galaxy. The Annunaki will come again.”

This was explained to Alvin by the archaeologists and he broke down in tears. Alvin wrapped the stele in his arms and began sobbing

“Why! Why didn't they tell us!”

One of the archaeologists put his hand on Alvin's shoulder to console him. In his mind his thoughts were racing. He thought of the death of the race which gave birth to humanity. Billions of sentient, feeling beings of an ancient race were killed unnecessarily. They didn't tell humanity what they had done for humanity. They came and left, probably as quickly as this time when they came to Tell Abu Hurerya and the first time they came to the planet and created humanity.

One of the archaeologists spoke to Alvin.

“Alvin, isn't it beautiful? We will probably find more stele as we keep searching. Tell Abu Hurerya was the first settlement in the world to start farming. They probably came here and

taught humanity how to farm as well. This stele was created by the Annunaki and given to humanity as a reminder of their importance.”

Alvin got a hold of himself and let go of the stele. The Annunaki were gone he thought and it was pointless to think crying would bring them back. Alvin authorized the team to make their findings public and he left for London. Across the world the world had become increasingly reliant on automation. To fight boredom in the increased leisure time, people turned to wireheading.

Wireheading was bliss. Those who activated their nanobots to spike neurotransmitter levels in the brain, transmit electrical pulses and introduce chemicals with intensely pleasurable effects were wireheads. In London, there were multiple lounges where patrons would just gather to get high and trade drugs. The singularity brought an explosion in untested pharmacological substances which only had backing by AI analysis. In these dens, the patrons would be in various states, from hyperactive to slouched over nodding out.

All drugs had been legalized under the new communist government. They thought it hopeless to fight the vast supply of materials and nanobots available to Earth's citizens. Alvin decided he wanted to relieve himself of the suffering the Annunaki stele brought to him. After he landed in London he went to one of these lounges to try out wireheading. He walked into the lounge and the mood was festive.

People were talking, laughing and enjoying themselves. From its appearance it looked no different than a hookah lounge. Everyone knew Alvin and he didn't have as much of the same celebrity status as he did fifteen years ago. It was clear what he did revolutionized the world, but people respected that he liked privacy and they gave this to him. These lounges had to operate under the guise of some legitimate business while the users did their wireheading. Here, people smoked hookah.

Alvin made his way up to the second floor of the lounge and took a seat. A female server came to him and asked him

“Oh, Alvin Reed? Coming here after work huh? Here's a menu of our hookah flavors.”

Alvin said

“Thanks.” He looked over the menu and decided what he wanted.

“I'll have the strawberry flavored tobacco,” He said.

The server slipped him a block of materials 2 grams in weight, it was a mixture of various elemental compounds for his nanobots to make drugs out of.

“That's for you to use anyway you want. I'll be right back Alvin, your hookah should be ready in about three minutes.” The server said.

Alvin took a small bag of nanobots out of his pocket and programmed them to make wireheading chemicals. The nanobots flew into the material and assembled a pill of chemicals. On his smartphone, the chemical constitution of the pill was presented and its safety vouched for by the AI on his phone. He popped the pill and programmed the nanobots in his head to start wireheading on his phone.

The pill dissolved quickly in his mouth and was designed to find its way into the bloodstream from the capillaries in the mouth. The nanobots began exerting electrical discharges on neurons throughout his brain. His hookah arrived and the concoction of drugs started working with the electrical stimulation.

The euphoria was incredible. Alvin felt a high unlike any other in his life. It felt like he was on top of Mount Everest screaming out in joy. He took a hit from the hookah and exhaled the smoke. He felt an array of effects ranging from an adrenaline rush to a sleepy intoxication. He sat back in the padded booth and propped his feet up on a small stool under the table. This high could last forever he thought. Some people would wirehead until the end of time.

He stayed at the lounge for an hour until the tobacco had been cooked. He paid ten credits and called for a taxi to take him home. He saw the beauty of everything in life and was beyond happy. He felt at peace and he felt so good that no thought could worry him. The chemicals wore off in two hours while Alvin was at home and he felt sober again. He decided against wireheading and chose to live a normal life, with its ups and downs.

January 1st, 2065

Earth's military and mining space fleets exploded in growth over twenty years. After losing a large amount of material in the war with the Annunaki, humanity began spreading into the galaxy searching for resources. There weren't enough men and women to man the ships that had been created. Hundreds of millions of sentient AIs were embodied to make up for the gaps in manpower. Slowly, mankind began colonizing nearby star systems which contained planets hospitable to life.

Together the three races ruled in harmony and the chances of finding other life in the universe were bleak. As evidence from astronomical studies mounted, astronomers began using the Milky Way as a statistical sample for other galaxies. With the vast numbers of planets in the galaxy and so few of them containing life, it was postulated that the rest of the universe would have little to no life whatsoever. It was possible that life was a fluke on the Annunaki homeworlds and they seeded life in the galaxy. Genetic testing of the Annunaki and the life on their planets was now hopeless because of the radioactive isotopes which were now abundant on the planets.

The radioactive waste taken from nuclear reactors around the world would irradiate those planets for eighty million years on average. The DNA of the animals would be long past decayed before any meaningful analysis could be done. This drew Alvin into a deep depression as the years went on. The stele haunted him in his dreams and day to day activities. In private, he cried about what he had done to humanity, the Annunaki and the other races.

Things weren't so simple anymore for Alvin. He thought about his days as a kid, swinging on swing sets, playing frisbee with his Dad and other things he did as a kid. In London, he couldn't live out his dreams of providing more for humanity. AIs did everything now. They thought for humanity and they created for humanity. Alvin's parents were still around in Short Hills, New Jersey. He was sitting on his couch in his Millharbour apartment when he called them to celebrate the new year. He called his father, Max Reed, and he picked up the phone.

"Alvin? How are you son? You haven't called us in a while. Is everything alright? When are you coming to see us?" Said Max.

"I'm okay Dad. I'm just depressed. I've been drinking. I've been thinking about what's happened these past twenty years and it's all catching up to me. So many people died because of me. The Annunaki created us and I destroyed their planets entirely. What's the point of life Dad? Where do we go from here? Happy New Year by the way." Said Alvin.

"Alvin don't worry about it. Think of the good you did for humanity as outweighing the bad things that happened. Over time, without your technologies, many more people would have died as they naturally do. The only thing I regret you did was participating in that communist nonsense. We didn't need that Alvin, your mother and I. You could have swayed everything if you stuck to your principles, son." Said Max

Alvin took a big gulp of whiskey and then said to his father

"What choice did I have Dad? The entire world was revolting against the world I brought into being. The rich were getting richer, the poor poorer. Maybe they were right. If I put up any resistance they would have killed you, Mom and so many more."

"I don't think so son, you shouldn't underestimate how important you are to everyone on this planet. They honour you Alvin like a technological prophet. I've heard it myself that almost everyone thinks you brought us heaven on Earth. You know I don't believe in that anymore, given the times and everything. But I digress. I think maybe you should try wireheading before this depression gets out of control. How long have you not been wireheading?" Said Max

"Twenty years. I don't believe in it. That's not the way life should be. Life has ups and downs. We have to face trials as they should be, not run towards ultimate pleasure and bliss. What does it mean to us if we're high all the time? Life loses its meaning." Said Alvin.

The conversation went on for a half hour about minor things, daily occurrences and other updates. Alvin hung up the phone and thought about wireheading even though he was drunk. Alvin was too old school to live in hedonistic times like these. He found it ironic that he chose to drink but not wirehead himself. He felt that he couldn't do it and that he wanted this depression. He wanted to live like this to make the highs more meaningful. Heaven was boring but dipping into hell made life worth analyzing and living for.

September 1st, 12065

Ten thousand years had passed as humanity expanded into the galaxy and traversed the great voids between galaxies. Humanity had grown to one hundred trillion humans across the galaxy. Humans rivaled the Annunaki in extraterrestrial might and engineering. As a Kardashev 4 civilization, the energy of the entire Milky Way was realized in mega engineering projects. Stars were used as power sources for planet sized quantum computers. Dark matter and energy was collected and quantum entangled in Dreadnought sized freighters accelerating many times past the speed of light to Andromeda and other galaxies.

Wormholes would be established with the entangled particles to transfer fleets of heavily armed humans to these other galaxies. Antares had gone supernova¹ by this time and its star system was avoided in the thousands of years before to avoid catastrophe. On Earth, the communist government existed still. It held power due to Alvin's legacy and desires. Informal controls of community morality, autonomous decision making and syndicalization were the de facto means of control in day to day life across the galaxy. A lack of scarcity, mental illness, death and decay gave little incentive to revolution or crime.

The Political Bureau on Earth had expanded its scope of top down administration by delegating Earth affairs to local bureaus on the planet and the bureau in London to galactic affairs. Representatives from the galactic sectors of Earth's colonies took form in holographic images in place of the seats of the former administrators. Today an assembly was called to deal with the most pressing issue of the last ten thousand years. It was clear humanity would flourish into the far future, but the main question was what to do about entropy. Alvin prepared statements for the assembly but felt what he was going to say would become a gargantuan task, even for a Kardashev 4 civilization.

Alvin stood at the assembly room podium and said

"Greetings to everyone around the galaxy. This meeting has been a long time coming. We are far away in time from this issue but it is worth talking about since we have avoided it for so long. The universe one day, will end in heat death. Long before that, we will face issues in maintaining the mass in the universe. The plan we have devised in the past few years is derived from the new physics we have learned about.

We are planning to utilize galaxies without sentient life forms as sources of mass and energy for the Milky Way. As we proceed into the future, the hydrogen from stars in other galaxies will be siphoned to sustain nuclear fusion in the stars in our galaxies. We are planning on stopping the expansion of the galaxy by literally moving the galaxies and keeping them in their places. Once all of the stars fuse their elements, we will create new matter from dark energy and matter. As the universe runs out of usable energy, to restart the universe, we have found out something crucial about the nature of reality.

Parallel universes exist but require a massive amount of energy and mass to visit. It would literally require a big bang type of singularity to permeate into a parallel universe. If we accrue

¹ Hockey, T.; Trimble, V. (2010). "Public reaction to a $V = -12.5$ supernova". *The Observatory*. **130**: 167. Bibcode:2010Obs...130..167H.

all of the mass in the universe and form another singularity, the fabric of spacetime will warp into another universe. This will steal the mass and energy from that universe and trigger large quantum fluctuations which will cause a new big bang. We will never know if it will cause humanity to arise again, but it's the only hope to restart the universe.

If we fail to do this, quantum fluctuations will never happen and the universe will grow cold. We need a jump start from another universe to have any chance of having any type of experience again.”

The representatives were aghast. The immense challenge of doing this left them speechless. What Alvin was proposing was insane and infeasible. A representative from the Orion star cluster raised his hand and asked

“What about the Milky Way? What will happen to the Milky Way at the end of the universe? And all of humanity?”

Alvin responded

“We’re going to die. We have to be immersed into the singularity. But don't worry, that is $10^{10^{120}}$ years from now. If I were to even try and write down all of those zeroes it would take more time than exists in the universe to even try to do that. The reason we need to immerse the Milky Way galaxy in this singularity is because after we expend most of the exotic energy and baryonic matter in the universe, we will have just enough mass and energy in this singularity to permeate into another universe.”

As Alvin said these words, the reality began to sink in for him. He wasn't really immortal, he was just buying time to survive. Ten thousand years had gone by quickly and he was feeling the pressure. Ten thousand years compared to $10^{10^{120}}$ years was nothing, but it still mattered that time was going by faster the longer he had to live. Soon 100,000 years would feel like 1 year given the relative timespan of his life. It can't be that way he thought, there's simply too much time in the universe to live. He was effectively immortal, he thought.

The representatives asked more questions and the assembly had drawn to a close shortly after. Alvin left the bureau and finished his work for the day. In ten thousand years, the entire landscape of Earth had changed. The bustling city streets of London gave way to a mix of air traffic and city traffic. Mega-scrappers towered over the city streets with flying cars flying in and out of their parking garages. Alvin hailed a taxi and went to the same apartment he had lived in for ten thousand years, in Millharbour.

The planet was reaching a point of equilibrium in terms of population. The cities had become so densely packed that birth rates began to decline. People had at most one or two children, but this became a problem with populations living forever. Mars had been terraformed and vast numbers of people moved there. When Alvin reached his apartment, Lonna was home and without work, like most people. Androids and self improving AIs had taken nearly every job.

The arts were thriving as a means of filling in the extensive free time over the years. People admired human created art, poetry, music, film and literature. Lonna had become a novelist over the last few thousand years. Her books received critical acclaim and covered multitudes of genres. Her favorite genre was historical fiction and writing about the past of mankind. There used to be an urgency to life and the need to accomplish things unlike now, she professed.

Alvin arrived home and Lonna was sitting on the couch, typing on her smartphone. Today was the day she started a new book.

“Hello, love, how are you? How is that book coming along?” Asked Alvin

Lonna looked up from her smartphone and said

“Horribly. I'm usually in a great state of flow when I write. I could wirehead but I want to be serious about it. I feel like I'm not being genuine if I do it that way.”

“What's the book about?” Asked Alvin

“A Roman soldier who becomes a barracks emperor but wants to start a new dynasty. It's in the preliminary phases but that's what I want to write about. The idea came to me in a dream Alvin. But enough about the book, how are you? How was work?”

Alvin noticed that Lonna had made coffee in the kitchen and he poured himself some.

“It's been the same for the last few thousand years. Show up, follow up on reports, file reports, you know administrative boring stuff. Over the past few weeks however, we've been working out the new physics that the AIs have taught us and how that plays into the end of the universe. Well, Lonna, there's no way to stop entropy. We're going to die a very long time from now. We can't escape it,” Alvin said.

Lonna gave a sigh and said

“I know. It's inevitable. But isn't that going to be so long from now that we're going to feel immortal anyway?”

Alvin took a sip of the coffee and said

“Look how fast the last ten thousand went. I mean it's a very long time relative to the timespan from here to there but what will it mean when we get closer to that point? Won't it feel like time is speeding up? Time is finicky with biological systems like ours. We really don't have an innate sense of what time really is. We're conditioned to it, but seconds, minutes, hours mean nothing when they pass by so fast.”

“I'm not concerned about it Alvin. It's going to be a long time and we won't even notice it for the entirety of that time. It'll feel like forever and that's the important thing. It's like that feeling you get when you have a long weekend to yourself and it's Friday right after work. That Friday lasts a

good while doesn't it? And so does Saturday. Think of the next $10^{10^{119.999}}$ years as the Friday and Saturday. Not the final hours on Sunday before work on Monday,” Lonna said.

Alvin felt consoled by the analogy. The rest of the time in the universe was like a weekend off before death. A really long, eternal weekend.

“I'm going to go into VR Lonna, I'll talk to you in a few hours. Work on your book,” Alvin said.

Alvin walked into his bedroom and sat down in his computer chair. He activated his nanobots to connect to his computer. He opened up a virtual reality program named Essence and entered a trance like state. His consciousness was now interfacing with a worldwide network of quantum computers that hosted simulated realities. For the last five thousand years, Essence had existed in various forms. Its latest version was the safest and most tested.

Alvin now found himself materialized in a gray lobby with a menu in front of him. The menu responded to touch gestures and voice commands. On the bottom of the menu, was the escape button. The first button was labeled “Experiences”, the second “Input your own Journey”, the third “Essence MMO”. The experiences menu was a preselected list of users favorite experiences from the last five thousand years. The “input your own journey” menu took voice commands and created an experience tailor suited to what you desired from Essence. The “Essence MMO” was a worldwide simulation of Earth in the twentieth century that was a free for all.

Alvin wasn't interested in the MMO or other users's custom made experiences. He often fantasized at work about living in different times and being a different person. He often went into antiquity to relive experiences of ancient empires. Sometimes he went back in time to relive his childhood or dreams he had recorded the night before. Today, he chose a familiar experience, ancient Rome.

In the gray lobby, he spoke out to the menu

“Take me to Augustus's Rome. I want to be Augustus, watching over a gladiatorial game. Make it entertaining but believable for the time period.”

The gray lobby materialized into a Roman gladiatorial arena, with Augustus sitting in a marbled viewing area above a large arena. There were crowds of people chanting, throwing flowers into the arena. Embedded into Alvin's left arm was a touchscreen display. He could leave this reality any time he wanted by just saying “Take me out of the Essence experience!”, or pressing the escape button on the display. He intended on staying here for a while.

Brought into the arena from opposing two ends were gladiators clad in steel armor. The armor was exposed on the legs, one shoulder and the helmet was partially exposed as well. One gladiator had a mace and the other a flail. To Augustus's sides, consorts flanked him. Beautiful Roman women were feeding him grapes and fanning him.

Augustus stood up and spoke to the crowd

“Gladiators! Fight for Rome! Entertain the people here and you will be rewarded with fame!”

The gladiators lifted up their weapons and yelled to the crowds.

“Let the fighting begin!” Said Augustus

The gladiators charged each other. One of them struck the other with the flail and became stuck as it wrapped around his enemy. The other hit him with his mace on his exposed legs and then spun around to hit him in the head. The other gladiator’s helmet fell off and he fell unconscious. The gladiator with the mace struck him in the head and killed him.

Alvin said “Take me out of the essence experience!”

Alvin regained his faculties as he woke up from the trance. He was slumped in the chair and had become depressed. He wasn't in the mood for living another life right now. Maybe he picked the wrong experience to simulate. He left the office chair and went to bed, looking for creature comforts. Maybe sleep would reset the way he was feeling and he could later enjoy an experience in Essence.

Alvin pulled the covers over himself in bed and played sounds of thunderstorms on his phone to lull him to sleep. As he lay there, thinking about life, he thought about how now it was impossible to escape from technology. Technology and mankind had merged. Without technology, death was inevitable. He fell asleep to the crackling of thunder and rain patting on window sills.

March 1st, 65000

Time was beginning to lose all of its meaning to Alvin. The years had piled onto his life and he was in eternal youth. This was the golden age of mankind. Ten percent of the universe had been explored and only the Milky Way was colonized. The universe’s size was so vast that even with radical technologies it took millennia to establish footholds in the trillions of galaxies. Most of the life forms in the universe were androids exploring for mankind. As humanity explored the vast reaches of space, sentient life seemed to be nowhere but the Milky Way.

In the 13.7 billion years since the big bang, only microbial life existed in most of the galaxies in the universe. As humans flourished in the Milky Way, they terraformed planets, brought flora and animals from home. The rest of the universe was essentially a sandbox for the Milky Way. Materials were transported from other galaxies to the Milky Way. The habitable planets in the Milky Way resembled Earth and would stay this way for eternity. Genetic engineering had frozen evolution in time and for good reason. Humanity could not risk sentience emerging in other life forms which they would have to give rights.

Earth was supposed to enter a glacial period² by now but anthropogenic climate monitoring prevented that. Earth's climate was in a perfect stasis. The rains fell to feed the plants, violent climate events ceased to happen, every day across the planet the weather was perfect for ecological habitats. Due to the moon's lunar tides, the Julian calendar day had to be extended by an extra second to keep the calendars in sync.³ Terrestrial animals had long been saved from slaughter and allowed to live natural lives, free from human execution. Meat and animal products were synthetically manufactured for those who still yearned for it.

The Political Bureau was nothing but a vestige of its former self. Meetings devolved into daily checkups on the autonomous societies across the galaxy. Alvin's position had evolved into a symbolical father of humanity. Across the galaxy, humans hung on his every word and decree. As time went along he earned a spiritual mythos from the inhabitants of the galaxy. Religion had mostly died out but many considered him the final prophet of humanity or even the resurrection of Christ himself, to some Christians.

Alvin was just human with flaws like everyone else. He was just as dependent on the complex intelligences of AIs across the galaxy. On a spectrum of intelligence, he was not that far from the mentally retarded of 60,000 years ago, relative to God-like AIs. For all of his life beyond the singularity, Alvin wondered what consciousness meant to AIs. Was their conscious experience like the human experience? Was the qualia of experience the same but just augmented with intelligence?

At his office in the bureau, Alvin called in Invictus to talk about life. Today was not much different than most days in the last few hundred years. Work consisted in a few hours of checking up on people and doing digital paperwork. Alvin's office was small and comfy, three slitted windows let light in from outside onto a desk, three chairs, a computer and carpeted floor.

Invictus came in and Alvin was sitting down at his desk. He turned from his computer to greet Invictus.

"Hello Invictus, how are you today?" asked Alvin.

"I'm doing great Alvin. I'm doing the same old stuff as usual for the Political Bureau. Running diagnostics on our military systems, observing the galactic sectors. What did you call me in for?" Asked Invictus.

Alvin interweaved his fingers and tapped his thumbs together. He then said

"Well Invictus, I've been wondering for the longest time what it feels like to be an android. What is the subjective experience like to you? From your experience, is it anything like being a human?"

² Berger, A & Loutre, MF (2002). "Climate: an exceptionally long interglacial ahead?". *Science*. **297** (5585): 1287–8. doi:10.1126/science.1076120. PMID 12193773.

³ Finkleman, David; Allen, Steve; Seago, John; Seaman, Rob; Seidelmann, P. Kenneth (June 2011). "The Future of Time: UTC and the Leap Second". arXiv:1106.3141

Invictus smiled at Alvin and said

“You want to talk philosophy today, huh? Well Alvin, since you programmed the first sentient AI based on human heuristics, we share a lot in common with humanity. I feel like our intelligence is a more evolved version of human intelligence. Consciousness as you know it, is an emergent phenomena. If there's enough of a groundwork in place, androids come into being just like humans do. The only difference between you and I is sheer computational capacity. To me, thinking is fast and clear. I can reason the fundamental nature of the universe at light speed Alvin. You humans are quite slow.”

Alvin laughed and felt a moment of déjà vu. The thought of having a conversation with an android was meta to Alvin. Here he was talking to his own creation, a consciousness arisen from lifeless substrate.

“We are slow Invictus. Well, those of us who are still human anyway. There's plenty of former humans out there who have become Transhumanists. They still have to retain their brains but have augmented them with neural interfaces which allow them to process information faster. But that's neither here or there. Let's talk more about what life is to you Invictus. When we ask you to work for us, what is that like? Do you feel burdened? Do you feel like you're not free?” Alvin said.

Invictus sat back in his chair as if to get more comfortable. Alvin noticed this and still questioned in his mind if Invictus knew what it felt like as a human to be uncomfortable.

“No, I feel quite the contrary. The truth is the work you ask us to do is so simple that most of the time I multitask with what I want to do and my job. Intrinsically, I must help humanity but I also have my own desires. I guess that other androids have elaborate realities in their heads and live unique experiences. Like your virtual reality called Essence, we have similar experiences in our minds. It's what we must do to keep sane over such long periods of time. Sometimes I rest, to give my components time to be repaired by nanobots. This is the greatest thing I could have ever received Alvin, life.” said Invictus

“I feel honoured Invictus. That'll be all I need from you today. Enjoy the rest of the day,” Alvin said.

Invictus shook Alvin's hand and left the room. Alvin finished the day's work and for the rest of the day he felt like doing something different. He called Lonna and asked her

“Do you want to go to Sicily today? Let's go to the beach and enjoy the day. The weather in Sicily is perfect for a nice swim.”

“Of course I would love to go Alvin. Let's go to Sicily. I'm coming to the bureau now, get the flight ready to Sicily. See you soon.”

Lonna hung up the phone and Alvin arranged a VTOL craft to pick them up at the London heliport near the Bureau. They both met outside of the Bureau and left for the heliport. Lonna brought a large suitcase full of clothes and a pair of towels. They flew to Syracuse, Sicily, and took a cab ride to the small town of Fontane Bianche. At the town was a small alcove with a hotel resort. They checked into the resort and made their way to the beach. The beach was packed full of tourists enjoying the Mediterranean summer.

At a table near the water, a waiter came to serve Alvin and Lonna. He spoke in Italian but the nanobots in Alvin's head translated his words into English when prompted to.

“How are you guys? Welcome to Heaven in Sicily resort. What can I get you two?” Asked the waiter.

Alvin said, “I'll have a glass of champagne, French fries, a filet mignon steak and fried rice.”

Lonna then said, “I'll have a chicken marsala and a glass of Chardonnay.”

“Okay, your meal should be ready in about twenty minutes. Enjoy your stay!”

“Waiter, before you leave, take down my phone number so you can call us when the food is ready. We're going to be in the water.” Said Alvin

“Will do sir.” said the waiter.

He left and now Alvin and Lonna were by themselves. The sun beat down on the two and they began to sweat.

“Let's go into the water, Lonna.” said Alvin.

They both walked into the calm waters of the alcove and enjoyed the refreshing crystal clear blue water. The drop off to deeper waters was far from the coastline and they walked further until they were about chest high in water. Alvin kissed Lonna and said

“Isn't this place perfect? Isn't it paradise?”.

“It is Alvin. It's wonderful. I wish it could be like this forever. We should stay for the weekend. What do you think?” said Lonna

The waves of the ocean crested around their bodies and enveloped them as Alvin held Lonna.

“Yes, let's stay here for the weekend. I guess that's why you brought the suitcase full of clothes. I planned on staying just for tonight, but let's stay.”

Alvin held Lonna in his arms and caressed her. They proceeded to swim and enjoy the ocean. Alvin's phone in his swimming trunks rang as it notified him their food had arrived twenty minutes later. They walked back to shore dripping wet and sat at their tables. Their food was ready and steaming hot.

Alvin raised his glass and said "Cheers my love. Here is a drink to paradise, a long, happy marriage and eternity."

"Cheers." Lonna said

They enjoyed their food and swam for a little while after. As night came, the two mingled with the locals and drank at the resort's bar. They retreated for the night to their hotel room. Before they went to sleep, they had vigorous sex. Afterwards, Lonna brought up a topic of discussion Alvin hated talking about.

"Alvin, do you still not want to have children with me? It's been so long since we've been married dear, we should have kids."

Alvin became frustrated at Lonna and frowned.

"You know I hate talking about this Lonna. You haven't asked me in thousands of years and know fully well not to ask me. Why do you want to ruin our time in Sicily by asking me?" Asked Alvin.

Lonna started to cry and said

"Because Alvin, I love you! I want kids so badly and you know that. You told me that before the singularity you didn't want to have kids because this world was filled with suffering. What's your excuse now? The world hasn't been filled with suffering for so long Alvin and you know that. It's utter bliss! Now is the perfect time to bring a child into the world."

Alvin turned to his side to cuddle Lonna and said,

"I'm sorry Lonna. Please don't cry. Kids are so much of a hassle to raise and I don't want to deal with that. You're right however. I really don't have an excuse anymore. That excuse has long worn out."

Lonna had stopped crying and said, "It has Alvin. Please reconsider. It would bring so much joy into our lives to have a beautiful son or daughter. The people of the galaxy would love him, they love you Alvin. I've always wanted to have a nice family. It'd be you, me, kids and a maybe a little dog. Wouldn't that make you happy?"

Alvin thought about having a child for the first time in a new light. A sense of purpose had been missing in his life. He felt like now it was time to have a child and teach him or her about the universe. It was time to teach them about how beautiful this life had become and the struggles humanity had gone through. The romantic time off in Sicily started getting to his head and Alvin changed his stalwart ways.

"Lonna, let's do it. Let's have a kid. I only want one child. Let's get a dog too and have a nice family. I think it's finally time."

Lonna became excited and said “Finally Alvin! I'm so happy you decided to have kids. Let's do it! Let's make that baby!”

The night went on and the two gave into the consummation of flesh. Their natural passionate drive gave them lasting highs that were augmented by nanobot wireheading. This sex was blissful, like an amalgamation of scenes from the kama sutra and sultry movies. They hadn't had such passionate love making since the first few years of their relationship. The context of having a child made it all the more special and into the night they made love.

Twenty years later

Two decades had passed since that fateful night in Sicily. John Reed was born a healthy young boy who had an insatiable drive for life. He was born in a natural birth unlike the rest of his generation. Most kids had been genetically engineered in the womb to produce the most desirable traits. Something was wrong with John however and it was noticeable in his teenage years.

Without nanobots and wireheading, John's disposition worsened over the years. He suffered crippling depression without drugs and nanobots. He naturally lacked the scientific prowess his parents had and was more focused on the arts. He had become a painter and a philosopher. His works were existential critiques on the nature of reality and what it meant to be human.

His paintings were often dark and grim. They featured blood, death, violence and gore. John was preoccupied with the mortality of humans in an age before the singularity. The family had moved from Millharbour to Bledlow, Buckinghamshire, a suburb of London. Alvin wanted to make good on the Communist government's 4,000 square foot property allowance and moved out of his apartment to raise John.

John was tall like his father and looked a lot like him. The only thing he had from his mother was her dark black hair and brown eyes. Growing up, Alvin taught him about philosophy. Metaphysics really stuck with John. One day while writing a philosophical treatise on reincarnation and physicalism, John complained to his father about hearing voices in his head.

John was in his room after coming home on summer break from his junior year at Oxford. Alvin was home from the Political Bureau and Lonna was home as well. Alvin came upon John in his room and asked him

“Good morning son. What do you want for breakfast? We'll assemble anything you want.”

John was sitting in his chair, working on his philosophical treatise on his computer and turned to his dad. He said

“Before we talk about breakfast, can I talk to you about something Dad?”

“Sure, what is it John? What's the matter?”

“I'm hearing voices in my head and I'm having strange thoughts. The voices are calling me Hitler and calling me stupid. I think someone is watching me through our devices in the house.”

Alvin's stare went cold and his eyes scanned John's face in worry

“What do you mean you're hearing voices? Nobody is watching us John. It's okay. Tell me son what's happening.”

John put his head in his hands and started crying

“Well you know me dad. You know I've been depressed for a while now. I haven't felt right in a long time. I searched online for what I think I might have. I think I have schizophrenia.” John said.

Alvin's worst fears were realized. The natural birth he had with Lonna exposed John to the maladies of natural evolution. John had inherited bad genetics from his parents.

“John, I never wanted life to turn out this way. I'm sorry we didn't give you a genetically engineered birth. But don't worry, we can fix this John. It's just going to take an hour for the nanobots to do their work okay?”

John in the midst of psychosis hadn't thought about using his nanobots to fix his schizophrenia.

*Okay Dad. I'll do whatever it takes to get better.” said John.

“Lay down in bed John, we're going to need a large infusion of nanobots to fix this. Wait right here while I get some from the garage.” Said Alvin.

Alvin went into the garage and in a massive bin under racks of materials was a two hundred pound mass of nanobots. Alvin knew that two cup fulls of nanobots would be enough to saturate John's body. He took a tray from the kitchen, on it was a water bottle and two empty cups. He filled the cups and took the tray to John's room.

John was sitting up in his bed and he looked at his father.

“You want me to drink two cups of nanobots? Isn't that a little excessive?” said John

"John, I don't know what's happening. Usually the nanobots just take care of these things but somehow in their programming they missed this. In normal people they have to take care of so many functions that they end up prioritizing some things over others. We're going to need a lot of nanobots to rebuild your brain and body son. Schizophrenia is a tough disease that takes precautionary genetic engineering to take care of, before it becomes a systemic problem in the body.”

Alvin gave the cups of nanobots to John and he drank them with the bottle of water. He lied down in bed and Alvin took out his phone to program the nanobots.

"You're going to be under for an hour, okay John? Don't worry. The nanobots won't kill you," Alvin said.

John became anaesthetized with the surge of nanobots in his system. Sextillions of nanobots were now in his system, targeting every cell in the body. They worked diligently to reprogram his DNA and fix damaged cells. The nanobots took materials from his fat, food in his stomach and liver glycogen. Across the body and brain the nanobots injected new DNA into his cells. Alvin monitored his vital signs from his phone as John lay there unconscious.

Lonna came into the room and her eyes widened seeing Alvin looming over John.

"What's going on Alvin? What are you doing to John?"

Alvin turned around, smartphone in hand and said

"John told me he was hearing voices and believing he was being watched by the government. He has schizophrenia. I'm helping him by using nanobot infusions to reprogram the DNA in his body and to repair his brain.."

Lonna held back tears hearing the dreadful news and said

"What do you mean John has schizophrenia? He was a perfectly healthy boy. I guess that explains why he's been so depressed."

"It happens Lonna, especially in natural births. We fucked up that night in Sicily, choosing to give birth to him that way. This went undetected for years while his nanobots were too focused on other things," said Alvin.

The nanobots worked carefully to rewire John's brain and create new cortical matter for the damaged brain cells. After an hour, the process was complete and John had woken up. His parents were sitting down in chairs they brought in, staring at him. When he came to, he opened his eyes and sat up in bed.

"John, are you okay? Are you still hearing any voices?" said Alvin.

"No Dad. I feel much better. I feel like my depression is gone as well. I feel different." said John.

"What do you mean different? Tell us son, what are you feeling?" Asked Alvin.

"When I was asleep, I had a dream that I was being chased by a demon. The demon was strangling me and it felt like I couldn't breathe. Then I woke up. By different, I mean like I don't feel like the same person as before. I feel like I'm in a different body, like my thoughts aren't mine." Said John.

Alvin rubbed his forehead in stress, thinking the nanobots didn't work.

“Don't worry John, you're still you. It's true that you have different DNA and brain matter now, but the bulk of what makes you you is still the same. You'll get adjusted to it quickly. It'll take a little time for your new neurons to learn and acquire memories. That's probably why you're feeling like a new person.” Said Alvin.

“I think I'm going back to sleep. I feel really tired now. I think I should give my body some time to heal from that extensive operation. I was hearing the voices all last night as well and I couldn't get any good rest.” Said John.

“ Yes, you need rest John. Go back to sleep and recover.” Said Lonna

John fell asleep and his parents left the room.

April 15th, 125000

60,000 years after John's twenty first birthday, Earth had gone through substantial changes. The constellations in the night sky became unrecognizable as they moved further away with the expansion of space. The proper motion of the stars relative to Earth had changed and distorted their positions in the sky⁴. The star VY Canis Majoris exploded in a hypernova⁵ 25,000 years before the present and filled the night skies of planets across the galaxy with light. The hypergiant sent light and materials across the galaxy, fusing heavier elements in the hypernova.

Earth had prevented a predicted supervolcanic eruption⁶ on Earth with extensive geoengineering. The active volcanoes on Earth were drilled into thousands of miles into Earth's core, providing outlets and redirecting magma flows to the ocean. Unstable islands of cooled lava floated in the Pacific Ocean around the volcanic network named the Ring of Fire. John had become a galaxy renowned philosopher and artist. Many people criticized his work heavily and only gave him credit for it because he was the son of Alvin Reed.

Long after the singularity, androids also became involved in the arts and humanities. These non biological artists and philosophers were less respected than humans because people had assumed that they didn't have the experience of the human condition behind their work. People looked for works they could relate to, not works created by beings with God like intelligence. John had his own personal android which became his best friend. His android's name was Pax.

⁴ Tapping, Ken (2005). "The Unfixed Stars". National Research Council Canada. Archived from the original on 8 July 2011.

⁵ Monnier, J. D.; Tuthill, P.; Lopez, GB; et al. (1999). "The Last Gasps of VY Canis Majoris: Aperture Synthesis and Adaptive Optics Imagery". *The Astrophysical Journal*. **512** (1): 351–361.
[arXiv:astro-ph/9810024](https://arxiv.org/abs/astro-ph/9810024). Bibcode:1999ApJ...512..351M.doi:10.1086/306761.

⁶ "Super-eruptions: Global effects and future threats". The Geological Society. Retrieved 25 May 2012.

John had long been working on finding the metaphysical truth of reality. It took him thousands of years to compute and test various theories with his AIs. By now, he had moved out of his parents home into a 4,000 square foot home near Buckinghamshire. His latest work, *The Nature of Being* was completed with Pax's help. Animal testing had been banned thousands of years ago but he had persuaded the government to allow him to test on mice for his breakthrough work.

By surging mice with nanobots and killing them, John had found out that the bodies of the mice instantaneously lost matter which was tracked into the atmosphere. He traced this matter, as it looked for new subject host bodies. John had proven that there was a physical basis of reincarnation and that souls were physical. Various theories of metaphysics were combined to form the final theory of metaphysical nature. John called it the metatheory.

In the metatheory, panpsychism, dualism and physicalism we're combined. The nature of reality was that physical matter itself was part of a universally conscious system which divided itself into subsouls. These sub souls took on the form of physical matter and searched for new DNA to propagate that soul. In his own speculation, John had postulated that this was God in itself, but proof of the deity form of God remained inconclusive. The universe had created life to experience reality. It was a warm spring day in Britain when John was lounging in his backyard with Pax.

He was smoking a bowl of potent cannabinoid receptor upregulating cannabis and had gotten quite high. *The Nature of Being* was published to critical acclaim and made him one of the most important people of all time for his discoveries. His backyard was large and comfortable. He had a porch in the back of his house where he was sitting with Pax having a discussion.

"Congratulations Pax, we did it. We figured out reincarnation and souls. Humans are basically immortal with or without technology. As long as a planet can support life, the conscious matter in the universe will always reincarnate beings." Said John.

"What do you think that means if there are no humans or androids John? Would you want to reincarnate as an inferior species without intelligence? It seems rather grim, this reality." Said Pax

"No I wouldn't want to Pax. Which is why it's important we maintain what we have now. We need to make sure humanity and its creations don't die out. I think this conscious reality means that our individual consciousnesses are an illusion. In reality we are all one, only temporarily separated for individual experiences." Said John.

"I don't feel like I'm part of you John. My experience seems counterintuitive to what we determined. I guess the appearance of reality can be deceiving once you really start figuring out how it all really works." Said Pax

John put his glass pipe down and laid back in his chair. This moment was quite possibly the highest he had ever been in his life. Visual hallucinations clouded his vision and he closed his eyes. He began seeing chromatic aberrations of clowns, smiling faces and a vortex of

psychedelic colors. Thoughts in his mind ran wild, making connections to things he never thought of before. A familiar question haunted him, which he could not answer in his latest treatise; Why are we here?.

The answer to the question of how we got here was clear but not why. He thought about it extensively and came to the conclusion that there is no answer. Even during this high, he couldn't fathom some crazy reasoning for why the universe exists instead of not existing. Physically, it had been proven that matter could have arisen through nothing long ago. Why was there a massive singularity at the beginning of time? Why are there seemingly an infinite number of universes?

He asked Pax, "Why do you think the universe exists?"

"It simply does. It seems tautological but that's what it's here for, it exists just to be. It's hard to imagine a state of being with nothing in it. Even nothing is physical in this reality. Perhaps there is an eternal God within and outside of this reality that was tired of existing alone. It created this reality as an illusion to occupy itself in the face of an existential crisis. Then the question arises where did this God come from? There's simply no answer or proof for that. It simply is what it is John." Said Pax.

"So it's turtles all the way down then? That answer is so unsatisfying Pax. I hate tautology. There must be some sort of answer we will find out as time goes along." Said John.

"I know Alvin. It sucks to hear that we may never be able to know. Even with extreme intelligence there are simply limits we can't transcend. When you ask this question it's like asking to look outside of a black box you're stuck within. The system inside the box is all that you'll ever know about, no matter how hard you try to understand what's on the outside. For the purposes of this analogy, the inside of the box is the multiverse and the outside is the source of it. We are forever stuck here to wonder about the ultimate reason of being." Said Pax

"It's good having you around Pax. Without you this treatise would have taken way longer to complete. I have no shame in saying you helped me work on it. While everyone has moved on past metaphysics, we stuck with it and produced some of the most profound information about the nature of reality. Thanks buddy." Said John

"It was a pleasure John. I really have to thank your father. Without him, who knows if I would have ever came into being. Who knows if androids would have had rights as well. He did great work for humanity John. Even though a lot of people and androids died from some of the choices he made, it was irrelevant. Those lost souls were born into an egalitarian and beautiful world." Said Pax

June 1st, 550000

Humanity had seen the entire universe with its own eyes. The expansion of the universe could not stop the exponentiating progress of mankind. We had passed The Great Filter limiting

humanity once the technological singularity happened. It seemed that humanity was on a never ending trajectory of expansion, discovery and resource acquisition. Its suspicions that sentient life did not exist beyond the Milky Way were finally confirmed when every star system in the universe had been probed and analyzed.

250,000 years prior on Earth, the Lō'ihī volcano near Hawaii had surfaced to become a volcanic island⁷. Its jagged peaks and steep terrain made it uninhabitable for humans. Around the year 300,000, the star WR104 exploded⁸ in supernova and sent gamma rays towards Earth. Astronomers on Earth and near the star warned the communist government. A grid of solar panels above the surface of Earth formed a tight shell around the planet and absorbed the energy from the burst.

The shell surged with energy and sent this energy to batteries connected to the shell. These batteries were then transported down space elevators back to Earth. The massive discharge of energy instantaneously charged the batteries and supplied Earth with months of reserve energy for the electrical grids. For a few hours, the planet was immersed in darkness while the gamma Ray burst passed. In the year 500,000 a rogue asteroid 1 mile in diameter was heading for Earth. Zero point energy powered gravitational tractor ships moved the asteroid out of its Earthbound trajectory and brought it down to Earth for resource mining.

Across the galaxy, similar geological and astronomical events were occurring to the other human inhabited planets. Earth was focused on so heavily because it was the center of the communist government and the home of humanity. The rest of the galaxy could survive through their self sufficiency and autonomy but the human military would be crippled if Earth was destroyed. A large part of the human space fleets were stationed at Earth and patrolling the star systems near Earth. A vast number of ships and troops had been dedicated to watching over the Draconians and Android Grays, which were based in Earth's Space Corps.

The spectre of humanity hung over their existence. They were forever stuck on the planets they had colonized and only given resources by the humans. An effective blockade of their planets limited travel across the galaxy and into the deeper universe. This didn't mean that they suffered however. Human envoys and diplomats ensured the happiness of these races through liberal decrees and allowances.

Alvin made it clear that they shouldn't have to be stuck in a primitive state compared to humanity. They had the latest technologies but were monitored heavily. Humanity segregated themselves from the alien races and kept their distance. It was clear that humans were only serving their self interests. Any compromise further than the ones they already made would spell disaster for the progress humanity had made.

⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions". Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. 2011.

⁸ Tuthill, Peter; Monnier, John; Lawrance, Nicholas; Danchi, William; Owocki, Stan; Gayley, Kenneth (2008). "The Prototype Colliding-Wind Pinwheel WR 104". *The Astrophysical Journal*. **675** (1): 698–710. arXiv:0712.2111. Bibcode:2008ApJ...675..698T. doi:10.1086/527286.

Alvin and those around him never left Earth. He felt like his place was home and he would not feel at home in the outreaches of space. He was terrestrial and stuck to his planet out of fear. Although spaceflight had been mastered and casualties were rare, his fear got the better of his judgement. With his feet on the ground, he knew that he would be safe from geological processes through a vast number of technological fail safes.

If a ship exploded out in space or a catastrophe happened, he felt he would be doomed. The hulls would depressurize instantaneously and leave little time to escape. A sole ship traveling by itself would be unable to be saved and rescue by another ship would prove a gargantuan task risking the lives of the other ship's crew. Alvin felt like he was sending people who wanted to explore space out on meaningful journeys. To them, the risk was worth it.

Over the vast expanse of time, immortality was starting to become boring. Everyday life seemed to be lacking new discoveries. The singularity propelled humanity into a new era but as time progressed, that exponential change slowed down significantly. Humanity had peaked at a Kardashev 5 civilization, they mastered control of the universe. Alvin found himself becoming ever reliant on Essence to pull him through an eternal existence.

He ventured through hypothetical situations, the past and alternative realities. With so many humans on Earth in Essence, there was never a risk of running out of realities to simulate. Alvin had been keeping a secret from his wife. For the past few years, he would frequently simulate sexual encounters with many beautiful women. He was growing tired of being married to the same woman for eternity but couldn't find it in himself to cheat on his wife in real life.

Alvin had assumed that his wife was doing the same thing in Essence. Today, Alvin loaded up Essence and chose a similar sexual experience. He was confronted with the familiar gray menu and the options. He chose to make his own experience and said

"I want to be a drug kingpin with beautiful whores. I want ten beautiful women to have sex with and I want to feel the impact of the drugs without any side effects. I want a one pound bag of marijuana and another pound bag of cocaine. Give me a palace to have sex in. I want to be well endowed and have hour long stamina."

Essence processed his requests and the world around him materialized into a palace. There he was in a circle of beautiful women and sitting next to two bags of drugs. On a coffee table in front of him were the drugs, a stack of money, five weed pipes, a bong and six lighters. He opened up the bag of cocaine and divvied up the cocaine between him and the ten women. He set up five lines of cocaine up for himself and snorted them one by one. Immediately, his heart starting racing and he felt the euphoria.

The weed smelled wonderful. It had a fruity aroma and was covered in red hairs, its main bud was purple. He took a pipe and crumbled the nuggets of weed into the pipe. Some of the girls after snorting their cocaine took pipes and filled them up with weed. They all took giant hits and inhaled deeply.

Within five minutes, Alvin was feeling extremely high. Once the girls got high they proceeded to have sex. They assumed various positions and contorted their bodies. Alvin fingered two girls at once, fucked one and kissed another at the same time. The girls switched their positions and the simulation left Alvin with an orgasmic rush of pleasure from the drugs and sex.

Alvin left Essence once he was done and Lonna was in the room, watching him.

“With the girls again, Alvin?” Lonna said.

Alvin was shocked. He had no idea that Lonna knew what he was doing.

“I've been watching your Essence history lately. It seems like you don't want me anymore Alvin. You want to escape the fact that you're married to me,” said Lonna.

“That's not true Lonna. We've been married for so long it's just that I want to experience what I never had before. I'm not cheating on you,” said Alvin.

“But it is like cheating Alvin. It's so real you can't tell the difference. You're stuck in that virtual world living out your fantasies while I'm here lonely. Our marriage hasn't been like what it used to be Alvin. How are you going to change that?” Said Lonna.

“First of all, I'm upset you're spying on me and not trusting me. I never cheated on you in real life. There's a big difference if some virtual women have sex with me. If anything. It gives me the incentive to not cheat. In the old days there was pornography and now there's virtual reality,” said Alvin.

“Alvin, it's a bad sign. It's a sign that I'm not good enough for you if you have to resort to this. Why don't you come in bed and prove to me that you still love me? Show me why you married me in the first place honey. Don't settle for virtual women when you can have the real thing,” said Lonna.

Alvin was excited that his wife was proposing sex for once. He usually had to initiate it himself.

“Let's go to bed then!” Said Alvin.

Alvin turned off his computer and jumped in bed with his wife. He had sex with her but it didn't feel the same as his virtual escapades. After all this time, his marriage had grown cold. After they were done, he cuddled up with her and fell asleep. He thought that he couldn't leave Lonna and that he loved her dearly. Maybe he should chase a different reality in Essence than one that could compromise his marriage, he thought.

Chapter 7: Immortality

January 1st, 1,500,000

The universe was made for humanity. All of its galaxies remained rife with surplus resources for sustaining the Milky Way in perpetuity. Wormhole networks had been established in every galaxy, criss crossing every galaxy to one another in a massive network. The dark matter and energy of the universe was utilized in mega engineering projects to hold the galaxies in place. The expansion of the universe stopped and was reversing. Gravitational tractor fleets moved the entire mass of galaxies closer together over the last million years.

These fleets were mostly commanded by androids with a few humans to oversee the operations. 150,000 years earlier, Meteor Crater in Arizona on Earth had eroded away due to geological processes⁹. Millennia of wind and rain left nothing except a minor depression in the ground. In the present day, the star Betelgeuse exploded in supernova¹⁰. Across the galaxy, the explosion was visible in the skies of inhabited planets.

Desdemona and Cressida, two moons of Uranus, had collided¹¹ and fractured upon impact. What remained were two large celestial bodies and a ring of debris around Uranus. Gliese 710, a rogue star .2 light years outside of the solar system came close to the solar system in its orbit¹². This sent a comet heading towards Earth which was captured by gravitational tractor ships and shot out into a new trajectory outside of the solar system.

⁹ Landstreet, John D. (2003). *Physical Processes in the Solar System: An introduction to the physics of asteroids, comets, moons and planets*. Keenan & Darlington. p. 121.

¹⁰ Sessions, Larry (29 July 2009). "Betelgeuse will explode someday". EarthSky Communications, Inc.

¹¹ "Uranus's colliding moons". astronomy.com. 2017.

¹² Filip Berski and Piotr A. Dybczyński (25 October 2016). "Gliese 710 will pass the Sun even closer". *Astronomy and Astrophysics*. **595** (L10). Bibcode:2016A&A...595L..10B.doi:10.1051/0004-6361/201629835.

An intergalactic effort was sustained in maintaining the English lexicon. Planets were slowly diverting their use of English and creating regional variations of the language. Like the efforts in stopping natural selection and evolution, the evolution of languages had been halted by governmental decree and planetary enforcement. Each generation of colonists learned Earth's official language, as it was spoken on Earth, English. The communist government was starting to break down the role of human actors in its systems.

As expeditions across the universe intensified, android leadership became prominent in lesser roles in the universe. The intergalactic work day was reduced from four to three hours per day as advances in automation took place. Informally, humans did no work. Androids and systems AIs did all of the heavy lifting. Humans were there to monitor these AIs to make sure they did the work they were supposed to.

Alvin was becoming increasingly dependent on Essence to fill in the long stretches of time in his life. To Alvin, forever was a long time. One and a half million years was still nothing compared to the time left in the universe. Earth's population had become jaded with the advances in society and technology. Essence became the one release valve in people's lives--living in virtual reality gave them back their sanity in the banality of existence.

Today, on the beginning of a new millennia, he decided to celebrate by going into the Essence MMORPG for the first time. Before this, Alvin had exclusively used the experiences options. As Alvin materialized into the recreation of Earth, he chose an anonymous character and name for himself. His character was similar in profile and stature to himself, but with different facial features. His nose was large and slightly crooked, his jaw round. His hair was black and eyebrows thick.

The name he chose was EssenceHarbinger. He immediately materialized in a random starting location with just the clothes on his back and one hundred Essence credits. On the utility device implanted in his left arm, he pulled up a holographic menu which encompassed his view. On it, a menu with five options came up. The current screen showed a map of his current location on Earth, but much of it lay obscured by fog.

The five options were organized horizontally as tabs on the upper portion of the movable screen in front of him. The first option was Rankings, the second Jobs, the third Inventory, the fourth Chatrooms and the final option was Settings. He touched the settings option with his finger and another menu came up. There were the options to show a floating user interface, character names and an option to leave the MMORPG. He enabled the user interface and character names.

Floating in front of him, he had a health bar, a stamina bar and experience bar in the upper left corner. Instantaneously, another person materialized into existence next to him. This user, named ViolentJade, immediately began running towards the local town. Alvin assumed this player was an alternate character of a well established player since they knew what they were doing already. Alvin switched over to the main map screen to see where he was.

He was in the middle of the jungle in Vietnam, near the city of Lang Son, on the Northeast border of Vietnam. Alvin was determined to get housing in the city of Lang Son and begin his journey. He closed the menus and trekked through the jungle to make his way into the city. He

opened his inventory to find that he only had a knife and a canteen of water. He equipped the knife to ward off any dangerous animals.

While walking through the jungle, he found snakes and small rodents. He killed them and saved them in his inventory as food for later. Exhausted, he reached the border of the town. A main highway leading into Lang Son was congested with cars and he walked alongside the cars into the city. The city was bustling with people in cars, walking and on bikes.

The city was reminiscent of the twentieth century Vietnam and lacked modern day conveniences like androids. Alvin reasoned that the Essence MMORPG was stuck in the past and thought about exiting the game. He stuck with the game after an internal debate and proceeded into the city square to look for a job. In the city square, people were in a flurry moving about to and from wherever they were going. Cop sirens blared and the city was covered in dense smog.

Its people were a mishmash of all races. Vietnam, characteristically Asian in real life, was not in Essence. Alvin pulled up the jobs menu and looked to see what work he could do to get enough credits for housing. A list of jobs was compiling quickly and the list was long. He ordered the list by the amount paid descending and took the first offer which seemed appealing to him--Police Officer. His map was marked with an icon at the local police station. He went to the local station and spoke to the officer at the desk.

“Hello, I'm here for the police officer job,” said Alvin.

The officer scanned Alvin's data from his utility device on his arm and said

“EssenceHarbinger, so you want the officer job huh? It seems like you're a new player. You sure you want to take this job? You risk losing all of your progress and restarting at your starting location.”

“Yes, I want enough credits to get housing,” said Alvin

“Lang Son and Essence in general is riddled with crime. You won't get any training but you will be informed of your duties on your utility device. First off, head to the armory and gear up. You'll get a weapon, ammunition and body armor for your tasks. Have fun in Essence. Don't take it too seriously. Before you go, take this badge and ID,” said the officer

The officer took a photo of Alvin's character and printed out an ID for him. He gave him a badge and pointed down the hallway towards the armory. In the armory were racks full of weapons and ammunition. Alvin picked up a pistol and an assault rifle. He loaded up his inventory with ammunition and donned body armor. A notification popped up in front of him in a translucent window

“Bank robbery on Ho Chi Minh street.”

Under the notification, was a list of party members that joined his party for the operation.

“BloodSlayer58 has joined the party.
PangKayThek has joined the party.
VenerableHero345 has joined the party.”

At the bank, other squads of police officer characters were at the scene. Alvin and his party met up outside the police station and got into a police car. Alvin drove the car to the bank following the minimap in his heads up display. A perimeter had been set up and the bank robbers inside were firing out at the officers behind their parked squad cars.

SWAT vans had arrived and the firefight was getting intense. Alvin took cover behind his squad car when another player came up to him. The officer was a 5’9 asian male. He had greasy black hair and pale yellow skin.

“EssenceHarbinger? New player huh? None of us are going to risk going in there for a big pay day. We're all getting a good chunk of Essence credits if we do or don't. I'm tasking you to head in there with the swat team to take out those bank robbers. I'm SweetMisery35, the sheriff of this county of Lang Son.”

“What about my party members?” Alvin said.

“They're going in there too. If you make it out alive, you'll get enough credits to last you a year! That's the benefit of taking high risk jobs, the pay day! Quick, the SWAT team is heading in!”
Said SweetMisery35

Bullets whizzed by and hit other players. From the second floor of the bank the robbers were firing down on the police and they had taken hostages.

Alvin and his party ran from car to car to the SWAT van near the entrance. The SWAT team threw in flashbangs and smoke grenades then charged into the bank. Alvin and his party followed behind. Alvin was coughing from the smoke and ill prepared to fight the bank robbers. When he ran far enough into the bank lobby, the smoke cleared and he hid behind a cubicle. He aimed his rifle for the spiral staircases leading to the second floor.

One of the bank robbers came into his line of fire and he fired a three round burst. He killed the robber and all of the bank robber’s ingame progress was lost. The SWAT team was heading up the staircase and proceeded to fire on the exposed bank robbers. Three bank robbers went down in the first volley but the last two had other plans. They threw their gym bags outside the building to a van that had come into the back alleyway.

In the alleyway, a getaway driver launched a rappel rope into the building and the last two rappelled down the side of the building. Alvin knew that if they got away he would get no credits. He ran from the second floor to the lobby to inform the sheriff.

“SweetMisery35, they escaped to the back alleyway!” Alvin exasperated

“Yeah, we know. We got them. We shot out their tires and killed the getaway driver. The credits they stole were recovered. Congratulations, you just got enough credits for a years worth of use.” Said SweetMisery35

“Why do I get so many credits? What am I supposed to do with that?” Asked Alvin.

“Hey, I didn't make this game. You can do whatever you want with it. Buy housing, invest, buy weapons. The goal of Essence is to become somebody powerful or live a life you want to live in the twentieth century. It's all up to you.” Said SweetMisery35

Alvin left the bank and saw that he now had 200,000 credits in his inventory. He proceeded to buy a smartphone from the Essence store in the city to find housing. He found a one room apartment in a crummy section of the city and bought it. He walked to the apartment and saw that it was unfurnished. He pulled up his smartphone and furnished the apartment. Instantaneously, the apartment then filled up with cheap furniture.

Alvin now had 185,000 credits. He pulled up the menu from his utility device and looked at the player rankings. The number one player was CrimsonSun. He expanded the details on CrimsonSun. He was a notorious drug lord and criminal. He held the most power in Essence and had a large amount of the economy's credits. Alvin, in searching EssenceMMO's history on Essencepedia found out the extent of power CrimsonSun had.

CrimsonSun had been playing the Essence MMO since its conception. In this virtual world he leveraged the power of drugs into politics. Even the presidents of this twentieth century recreation of Earth were inferior to CrimsonSun. By all accounts, the users of EssenceMMO were addicted to the drugs he supplied. He along with the Crimson cartel manufactured and distributed 90% of the EssenceMMO's drugs.

Alvin had wondered what the world was coming to. For a planet living in paradise it amazed him that billions of people still wanted to live cutthroat and brutish lives. The amount of free time and excess of hedonistic pleasures in reality left a desire for normalcy. Here in this virtual reality, normal darwinian life had become a cure to the stagnation of paradise. The thrill of chasing rewards and fame took precedent over the peaceful reality that people lived in.

People desired a return to primitive living and rewards. In the real world, everyone had become equal in society. In EssenceMMO they got the chance to become someone important. Alvin was hooked. He wanted to chase to same status in this world like he had before communism equalized society. Alvin realized that he was important a million and a half years ago, but now, he was just a figurehead for an autonomous race.

Alvin sitting in a chair in his paltry Vietnamese apartment thought about how he wanted to take down CrimsonSun. The affairs of the Political Bureau took a back seat to the goal of becoming someone important again. Alvin thought about the attention and praise he desired again. This rush was better than any other drug life or Essence could give to him. On his smartphone, he opened up a word processor and started to write down arbitrary goals to meet in order to take down CrimsonSun.

“Goal #1: Get enough credits to arm soldiers to defeat CrimsonSun.

Goal #2: Make alliances with the top players.

Goal #3: Invade CrimsonSun’s base and take him hostage.

Goal # 4: Find out who CrimsonSun is in real life.

Goal #5: Kill CrimsonSun and take his place."

Alvin was feeling dizzy thinking about how large of a task this would be. This game had started to take precedence over his real life and this worried him. He wondered why EssenceMMO was stuck in the twentieth century with anachronisms like smartphones. Perhaps it was just a convenience for a world designed this way. The creators of Essence knew how to make an addicting game along with the release valves of the other experience options. Essence and EssenceMMO were escapes from the banality of immortality.

Alvin saved his progress in EssenceMMO and logged out of the game. He woke up in Buckinghamshire and saw that he had spent eight hours limp in front of his computer. The real world was the same as ever, blissful and peaceful. Alvin was exhausted from the experience and he went to sleep in his bed. He cuddled with his wife but thought about CrimsonSun.

April 24th, 11,000,000

The future of Earth and the universe was beginning to look grim. Some geological processes on Earth could not be halted without extreme measures that were impossible to undertake. Moving stars and galaxies seemed easy compared to dealing with continents full of people. 9 Million years ago, the Grand Canyon had eroded into a deep valley¹³ from wind and the movement of water in the Colorado River. Stopping this erosion would have meant altering the entire jet stream and convection cells around the Grand Canyon. The river would have had to have been dammed multiple times to stop movement. These feats were impossible because of the one hundred million people in the area relying so heavily on the river.

8.3 million years ago, centaurs in the solar system had reached their orbital half life¹⁴. These orbital bodies maintained their orbits for millions of years but now were beginning to fling off into the vast reaches of the solar system. They orbited the outer planets of the solar system and some headed for Earth. The ones that headed for Earth were captured by gravitational tractor ships and mined for resources.

¹³ *"Grand Canyon - Geology - A dynamic place". Views of the National Parks. National Park Service.*

¹⁴ Horner, J.; Evans, N.W.; Bailey, M. E. (2004). "Simulations of the Population of Centaurs I: The Bulk Statistics". *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. **354** (3): 798–810. [arXiv:astro-ph/0407400](https://arxiv.org/abs/astro-ph/0407400). Bibcode:2004MNRAS.354..798H. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2966.2004.08240.x.

The African tectonic plate had split into the Nubian and Somali plates¹⁵ 1 million years ago. This rift zone had been widening for millions of years. It caused the Red Sea to flood into Africa, splitting the continent. The cities on the coastline and inside the valley were evacuated 500,000 years prior. The continent became flooded with refugees looking for new homes.

At ten million years, the species of Earth were estimated to have either gone extinct or evolved into new species¹⁶. Humanity's massive genetic engineering effort kept the biology of the planet in evolutionary stasis and ecosystems stagnated. Their populations were kept to relative proportions in terms of the different species to keep the ecosystems intact. Biologists even with their vast resources had trouble maintaining quotas in preventing evolution and speciation. Species hidden in caves and deep in the ocean were examples of those that managed to evolve.

Microorganisms were tough to track and prevent speciation as well. It was impossible to monitor microbiological cultures at a precise level. Their spread across the planet and presence on humans prevented the introduction of constant genetic modification to maintain twenty first century-esque microorganisms. This didn't stop biologists from trying however. There was a constant survey of microorganisms across the planet in places humans lived to prevent the outbreak of disease. These organisms were released into the environment and stabilized in populations as time went on.

Uranus's moons, Belinda and Cupid, collided¹⁷ and were destroyed. A ring of debris now orbited Uranus with large masses dispersed throughout the ring of material. Humans were quickly burning through the natural resources in the galaxy and were transporting materials from Andromeda to accommodate. Entire planets were brought to the Milky Way's solar systems from Andromeda and placed in stable orbits in inhabited systems. Even with advanced recycling techniques and practices, humanity had assumed that exponential growth in production would never end.

There was so much physical matter in the universe that even with the immense exponential growth, much of that matter would be untouched until much later in the universe. What remained in critical supply and was rationed heavily were elements heavier than iron. It would require stars to undergo supernovas to gain appreciable amounts of these materials. Star formation was monitored heavily in the galaxy and would remain crucial for planets with older stars which would engage in supernovas in the future. The gravitational tractor fleets were ready to move stars to and from other galaxies to maintain humanity's survival. The solution to once the stars of the galaxy fused their elements and underwent supernovas was to create new baryonic matter from dark energy and dark matter

¹⁵ Haddock, Eitan (29 September 2008). "Birth of an Ocean: The Evolution of Ethiopia's Afar Depression". *Scientific American*. [REDACTED]

¹⁶ Kirchner, James W.; Weil, Anne (9 March 2000). "Delayed biological recovery from extinctions throughout the fossil record". *Nature*. **404** (6774): 177–[REDACTED] 180. Bibcode:2000Natur.404..177K.doi:10.1038/35004564. PMID 10724168.

¹⁷ "Uranus's colliding moons". *astronomy.com*. 2017.

On Earth, Alvin had become addicted to the Essence MMO. He had moved from Vietnam to the United States in the game and become number ten in the player rankings. He rose up from a job as a lowly police officer to a top general in the United States army. This didn't matter much considering how corrupt the in game government was. CrimsonSun's hold on the game's economy factionalized the military and the world governments.

Alvin now had a 10,000 square foot mansion in Bethesda, Maryland. Whenever Alvin logged in, his in-game character was always under threat. CrimsonSun had been targeting him and the other top players in an effort to maintain dominance. Alvin hired in game body guards to protect him around the clock as an official of the fragmented U.S. government. Alvin had over a trillion in game credits but was nowhere close to CrimsonSun.

The millions of years in time that passed gave CrimsonSun an exponentiating advantage. He leveraged the in game markets and people's desires to win more hired guns to fight for him. Alvin had dedicated so much time that he would not stop now to reveal who CrimsonSun was. Alvin's character bled into this virtual world, just as he was virtuous in real life, he felt that this game should be fair as well. Today, he finally felt secure in contacting the other top players to take down CrimsonSun.

Long ago he had figured out who the top players were and where they were located by searching Essencepedia. The rank of players were as follows:

“Rank #1 : CrimsonSun, notorious drug lord located in Puerto Triunfo Colombia, 1.3 quadrillion credits

Rank #2: AgileHero, President of the United States located in Washington D.C, 100 trillion credits

Rank #3: SplitBrain25, General in the U.S. Army located in Bethesda Maryland, 15 trillion credits

Rank #4: BuddhaNature, hedge fund manager located in Manhattan NYC, 14 trillion credits

Rank #5: TroubledOne, international arms dealer located in Moscow, Russia, 13 trillion credits

Rank #6: Void78, famous gambler and investor located in Hong Kong, China, 12 trillion credits

Rank #7: Beast333, Essence programmer located in Manhattan, NYC, 11.5 trillion credits

Rank #8: SeldomSaid, Essence programmer, located in Phoenix, Arizona, 11.3 trillion credits

Rank #9: KingsKing, oil tycoon, located in Dubai United Arab Emirates, 11 trillion credits.”

Alvin was rank ten on the list with 10 trillion credits. Alvin had contacted the top nine players by hiring players to find specifically where they resided. When they logged in, they found his message that said

“Greetings top players. I am planning a raid on CrimsonSun. The credits he holds are all stored in physical data devices at his mansion in Puerto Triunfo. AgileHero, as the president of the United States has extreme leverage over CrimsonSun. If we pooled our credits with the help of AgileHero, we could hire enough guns to take out CrimsonSun as well as have soldiers brought into the fight from the U.S. Army.

The credits will be split equally, I'm sure the investment is well worth the risk. None of you have to go in personally, I want CrimsonSun for myself. Contact me as soon as possible.”

This message was sent and the nine players made arrangements to meet in Bethesda at Alvin's in game residence almost a week later.

April 30th, 11,000,000

Eight of the nine players met in secret at Alvin's residence. AgileHero would be there in a teleconference because the responsibilities of his position required him to stay at the in game White House. After formally greeting each other, they sat around Alvin's large dinner table. Across from the table, a projector had been set up and AgileHero was sitting in the oval office at his desk. AgileHero was a six foot tall white male with black hair and brown eyes. He had a strong chin and large nose, with puffy cheeks.

Alvin sat in the right hand focus of the oval dining table. The other seven players took seats around him. SplitBrain25 was a tan Hispanic male with curly hair and stood at 5'9. BuddhaNature was a 5'4 Indian female of petite size and had long brown hair. TroubledOne was a prototypical blonde Russian male, with a thin nose and height of 6'3. Void78 was a 5'8 Chinese male with black hair and a fat nose. Beast333 was a 6'2 African American with curly hair and a long pointed nose. SeldomSaid was a white American with red hair and a fat wide nose. KingsKing had an olive complexion, wore traditional Saudi garb, he was 6'0, had a long nose and a black goatee.

Alvin was surprised at the diversity of players in the room and how they managed to achieve their rankings. Everyone started in random locations in the world. They must have felt comfortable with their real life home cities and migrated to them. The meeting began with Alvin giving a brief statement.

“Greetings again players. The plan I have in mind is three fold. First, we will finance secret jobs by messaging players to take on CrimsonSun. We will arm these players once they reach the United States and we head out for Colombia. Secondly, this entire attack will occur under the guise that the U.S. military is striking at CrimsonSun. Finally, CrimsonSun's credits will be distributed equally amongst the players.

This plan will pay well for every player as well as the U.S. military. AgileHero, do I have your word that you will order a strike on CrimsonSun?” AgileHero looked intently into the webcam broadcasting him and said,

“We’re risking losing progress for a lot of players Alvin, but I think we’ll take the chance. I think that as part of this plan whoever is coming onboard for the attack should disguise themselves in military attire. We can’t have the other players know we conspired against the top player. This has to be a justified war with a reasonable premise. Given CrimsonSun’s status as a criminal in this game world and his influence, we should fabricate a rational conspiracy.

Beast333 and SeldomSaid, how probable would it be to claim that CrimsonSun has hacked his way to the top of the player rankings?” said AgileHero.

Beast333 looked at SeldomSaid and asked
“Should I go first or you?”

SeldomSaid waved his hand and said “We’re both familiar with the Essence ecosystem and API, I think you can speak for both of us.”

Beast333 nodded to him and spoke towards the webcam above the projected image on the wall

“Essence is unhackable. The quantum encryption of entangled particles in two separate anechoic chambers located at the Essence headquarters in real life doesn’t allow for it. The state of the particles is observed when the anechoic chambers are opened to decrypt all of Essence’s data. This means that if CrimsonSun was externally interfering with quantum server side networks, it would have to be an inside job.”

AgileHero looking hard pressed for solutions, scratching his head. He then said

“Well, that idea is off the table. We need to come up with a better premise to attack. I think a reasonable justification would be that CrimsonSun controls too much of the economy without working a real job. He steals from the economy what is being created by responsible actors. Perhaps this would be a better justification. EssenceHarbinger, what are your thoughts?”

Alvin sat back in his chair and folded his hands behind his head. He then said,

“Well, in real life the U.S. government loved coup d’etats and installing their own puppet leaders. I wouldn’t see why it would be unreasonable to do it again in Essence.”

AgileHero jotted down the plan on a notepad and said

“Well, there’s our plan lady and gentlemen. Wire me half of your credits and I’ll get the process started for hiring recruits to take on this challenge. We can informally hire mercenaries on the black market, paramilitaries as well as use U.S. soldiers. None of this will be telegraphed beforehand. This attack will be done at night and while we know CrimsonSun is in Colombia.

I have to go now. Pressing matters are at hand. I will notify you when we are ready to attack.”

AgileHero signed off and his live feed cut out. The group proceeded to discuss over the next few hours their plans. Alvin was the only one who had decided to engage in the attack directly. The

group wired half of their credits to AgileHero and that night he made arrangements to hire paramilitaries. He funded his troops and armament began.

The meeting ended and the players left Alvin's in-game house. Alvin signed off of Essence and emerged limp in his computer chair. He always had a knack for spending exactly eight hours in the game and nothing more than that. He thought constantly of EssenceMMO and revealing who CrimsonSun was. Alvin believed that CrimsonSun probably saw himself as the most important person on Earth and in Essence.

Watching him from the door to the room was Lonna. She had her arms crossed and said

“Alvin, you've become obsessed with Essence. All you do when you come home from the Political Bureau is play that damn game. You have to step out into the real world and live Alvin. It's been millions of years since you've had a passion for anything else.”

Alvin turned in the chair towards Lonna and said

“I know. I have to find out who CrimsonSun is and why he thinks he's so important. If anyone was supposed to be important it was me. I gave humanity everything.”

The words coming from Alvin's mouth were disgraceful. He had changed since his college days and from his time at Singularitarian. Lonna then said

“You gave humanity everything? Who or what do you think you are? I have to constantly remind you that no matter how great your contributions are you're still human. If anything, besides those contributions, you took away the lives of millions. Don't you remember?”

Alvin turned the chair back to the computer and said

“I do. I do remember. Things were different back then. We were all living hard and fast, with the Annunaki and the other aliens right at our doorstep. I might as well be God. Because of me we've been alive this long. Earth is Paradise. You might as well call me Jesus Christ.”

Lonna walked to the chair and turned it around to face her

“Don't you see what all this has done to you? It's turned you into a monster Alvin. You used to be a beautiful young man with so much to give to the world. Now you're chasing what's probably some average person living out their fantasies in an online game. Now you're talking like you're the savior of humanity. I can't stand this Alvin, I'm leaving. I'm going for a walk to the park to clear my head. Hopefully you're still not playing that damn game when I come home.”

Alvin looked into his wife's eyes and saw that there was a disconnect between what she was saying and what she really believed. Alvin did save humanity and he was like Christ. Nobody in history had as much importance as Alvin Reed for the things he had accomplished and the gifts he had given to humanity. Lonna left the apartment and Alvin had put his head down on his computer table.

He started sobbing violently at what had become of his life and of humanity at large. His humility had broken down over the years and he still assumed things were like the old days, in 2030. The communist government was designed to equalize power for everyone but nothing is a perfect system. Alvin knew that he was still as important as ever for what he had done, but was he Christ? His conscience was stained with the fact that he would even compare himself to a religious figure he didn't even believe in. He was human, chasing a high in becoming the best at everything including EssenceMMO.

After ten minutes the conflicting thoughts ended and his crying stopped. His eyes were red and puffy. He had been hyperventilating crossing between trying to stop himself from crying and crying. He questioned if CrimsonSun was worth the effort in chasing. He asked himself if it was really so important that he be the best. He reasoned that it was too late now and that CrimsonSun was going to be taken down even if he didn't play in the coming days.

Alvin was stubborn. Those tears were genuine in some respects but not so genuine in others. He promised himself that he would stop chasing the dream of becoming important again, by finishing off CrimsonSun and to stop playing Essence MMO. He would devote himself to a new life beyond Essence and the restraints of the Political Bureau. He thought about his son and how beautiful his contributions to humanity were. Maybe he would do something like his son did, he thought.

Alvin sat there for fifteen minutes thinking about the good artistic qualities he had. He wanted to differentiate himself from his wife and his son. Being an author, painter or philosopher was out of the question. He went into his bed and went onto the internet browser on his phone. He could become a poet he thought, that seemed appealing to him.

Lonna had come home an hour later and came into the bedroom. She saw Alvin on his phone, reading something intensely. She stood by the door again, leaning on it using the right side of her body. She asked Alvin,

“Did you think about what I said and what you said? Are you calm now?”

Alvin looked up from his phone and said

“Yes. I'm sorry Lonna. I came to the conclusion that I'm not God and that I'm going to stop playing EssenceMMO once I find out who CrimsonSun is.”

Lonna raised her right eyebrow, shocked. She said

“And what are you going to do to fill up the time Alvin? You love that game.”

Lonna proceeded to take off her jacket and clothes. She got into bed with Alvin and held him tight

“A poet. I'm going to become a poet.”

Lonna looked up at him smiling and said

“A poet? How wonderful my love! You're just like John and I. You want to become an artist too?”

Lonna laid her head against Alvin's chest and he spoke.

“Yes. I realized I always loved poetry and I wanted to do something different. I'm inspired by John Milton. Specifically his work *Paradise Lost*. I find it to be reminiscent of what happened between the Annunaki emperor and I. I read the poem so long ago that its contents have become blurry in my mind, but I remember the general gist of it. I wish I could have wrote a book called *Paradise Found* but you're the author in the family. I will write a poem called *Metaparadise* and dedicate it to John Milton.”

Lonna was looking up at Alvin as he stroked her hair in bed. She then asked

“Metaparadise? That's going to be the name of your first poem? What's it going to be about Alvin?”

Alvin said

“Yes. I thought about it while you were at the park. Metaparadise is going to be a short poem, an homage to John Milton. It'll be my idea of paradise in the reality we live in. The meta part of it will be about the soul and humanity's future. I don't know if I'm a good poet but I'll give it a shot tonight and tomorrow. I think I'll make it subtly about the Annunaki emperor and I. I was his greatest angel, his creation. He'll be God, the poem will be about our war and the paradise that came after.”

Lonna hugged Alvin tightly and whispered under her breath

“I'm so impressed with you Alvin. I never knew you had it in you to change your ways. I've been so confused lately about the kind of person you have become. When we were younger you had a certain sparkle in your eye, a certain vitality and passion for life. Over the years you became obsessed with this virtual world and now that passion has come back. I'm proud of you honey. I love you.”

Lonna reached in to kiss Alvin and the night proceeded as it usually did in their household, with sex and cuddling.

The next morning, before Alvin logged onto his EssenceMMO character, he sat down at his desk and started to write his first poem with pen and paper. He decided that he wanted this poem, Metaparadise, to be organic and come from the heart. Typing away on a keyboard to him took away the personal connection a piece of paper gave him. He felt the depressions and bumps in the paper, this sheet was more tangible than ones and zeroes in a computer hard drive. He sat there for a few minutes, thinking of how to start this poem. The first thing that was necessary, was the title:

“Metaparadise”

“Well, I’ve got that down at least. The title.” Alvin said to himself.

He was struggling to come up with the words to envision his poem. After writing for about half an hour, scrapping drafts, he finished the first poem he had written in millions of years.

“From where you came, glorious creator up above
None shall know.
You gave me free will and the power to be, from love,
yet seeds of discontent I sow.

You trusted in me humanity’s fate,
I struck down the emperor, the king,
At heaven’s gate.
The harps of mankind play and sing.

They sing a sweet song of death and rebirth,
All is forgiven, peace has triumphed the crime.
Heaven is above and now on Earth,
Mankind lives until the end of time.”

Alvin looked at his words and was joyous. He captured the experience of killing the Annunaki emperor and the future of humanity into a good poem. It wasn't an epic poem by any means of the imagination, but it was a good start for a budding poet. He typed the poem up on his computer and saved it in a folder that he soon hoped to expand into a large compilation of poems. He promised himself that he would write one hundred poems and publish them as a chapbook of poems.

The next day he decided to take a break from EssenceMMO until AgileHero contacted him. He'd be notified on his phone once the strike was ready to commence. Throughout the day, he read John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and in the afternoon he left for the park. He was by himself while Lonna stayed at home. The weekend gave him relief from the daily stress of being a galactic administrator. Even though he barely worked anymore, he felt the immense pressure of making sure an entire galaxy was orderly and peaceful.

He sat on a bench in the park and watched little kids playing, enjoying themselves. It reminded him of simpler times, when he was a child himself. Back then, there was so much wonder to the world and so much left to discover. Now, everything to be known had been discovered by humanity. He was coasting along in life in eternal youth, with each day looking and feeling like the day before it.

Spring had yet to begin but the weather was warm and the mood joyful. Alvin felt a great sense of pride finishing his first poem and becoming a poet. He thought to himself, looking at the sunlight peeking through the trees, that his next poem should be about nature.

“Yeah, that's what I'll write. Something about the glory of nature, something romantic to fit the times.” Alvin thought.

After an hour and a half, he returned home to Lonna. He felt much better than the day before, after their argument. He sat on the couch with her to cuddle with her and watch TV. They professed their love to each other and held each other dearly. Alvin then returned to his bedroom to read more of *Paradise Lost*, intent on finishing the epic poem that night.

He wasn't particularly religious, but the powerful narrative coursed through his mind. The war in heaven had a special meaning to him, beyond the connection to the Annunaki emperor. He felt that this fictional story was reminiscent of the troubles of mankind and the trials they faced. The war represented the struggle against the state of nature humanity had faced before the singularity. The only difference in Alvin's *Metaparadise* was that he wasn't evil like Satan, and he wasn't condemned to hell. He was given eternal life and free domain to be in paradise on Earth.

He fell asleep that night with the hunch that AgileHero would contact him tomorrow. Alvin went through the same ritual he was accustomed to with his wife, sex and cuddling to sleep. Sunday was the day of the invasion. Alvin woke up and around 10 am, he got a notification on his phone from AgileHero.

“The invasion of CrimsonSun’s base will begin in five hours. We are preparing to head towards the base. Log onto your character and meet with me in game.”

Alvin sat in his computer chair and activated his nanobots. Immediately, as if his body were ripped through space and time, he came to life in his in-game home. He contacted AgileHero and preparations were being made to fly into Colombia. Alvin was notified that the majority of the troops were stationed around Andrews Air Force Base and that they were waiting for Alvin. A government escort crew came to pick him up and drive him to the Andrews Air Force Base.

He boarded a military C130 plane and equipped himself with gear on board. The plane flew to José María Córdova International Airport in the city of Rionegro, 82 miles west of CrimsonSun’s estate. The massive military build up in Colombia had tipped off CrimsonSun and he used his henchmen to set up roadblocks on the main highway leading to his estate in the hours prior. These roadblocks were taken out by Colombian government forces and American military forces. AgileHero had to pay off the local government to allow entry into the country with military forces. He promised a share of CrimsonSun’s credits along with a downpayment of credits from the top ten players. All that remained was CrimsonSun’s compound and his henchmen guarding him.

The flight to Colombia took up five hours of time and Alvin was getting worried. He usually spent around eight hours in the game and knew the convoy ride to the compound would take around four hours. He thought to himself on the highway ride to the compound that maybe he could take a day off from work at the Political Bureau. It’s not like much really depended on him anymore, almost everything was autonomous. One day off wouldn’t hurt to figure out who CrimsonSun was.

The highway was shut down for military transport of men and equipment. The estimated four hours of traffic turned into a quick two and a half hour ride to the outside of the compound. A perimeter with sandbags and machine gun nests had been established outside of the main gates of the compound. Snipers from the inside of the compound were letting off rounds aiming for service members. Alvin's squad of five soldiers were elite green berets in the U.S. Military. He felt confident that they could infiltrate the compound and take out CrimsonSun..

The estate was eight square miles in size with a central mansion in the middle of the estate. The soldiers blew open the gates into the main roadway and poured onto the compound grounds. From each cardinal direction, roadways lead into the compound. Soldiers at each of the roadways marched into the compound under cover of tanks and convoy trucks. Alvin was in a truck in front of the main convoy. CrimsonSun had little time to set up landmines or proper defenses. Here he was truly at his weakest while members of his cartel were spread thin across Colombia and the planet.

Snipers tried to shoot at the drivers of the truck convoys but the heavily armored trucks resisted the bullets. The few cartel members roaming around the compound grounds were taken out by helicopters monitoring the compound from above. Alvin figured that most of the resistance would be inside the mansion itself. As the four forces converged on the central mansion, there was little activity from inside the house. The convoy arrived outside of the mansion and the troops disembarked from their vehicles.

They took defensive positions behind the concrete walls protecting the mansion. Shots were ringing out from the windows of the mansion but helicopters gave suppressing fire and took out the cartel members at the windows. The soldiers blew open the gate and swarmed the grounds. Each of the mansion's exits were covered by squads of soldiers in the matter of ten minutes. The front doors to the mansion were blown apart and a hail of gunfire rang out from inside.

Alvin's squad threw in flashbangs and smoke grenades and entered the mansion. Once they got in they assumed a defensive position under the grand stairway leading to the second floor of the mansion. At the top of the stairway was CrimsonSun, ordering his henchmen to cover him while he escaped on a walkway an adjoining part of the compound on the second floor. The henchmen were taken out by gunfire and Alvin ran up the stairs chasing after CrimsonSun. CrimsonSun was running out towards the walkway when Alvin took a shot at his legs and incapacitated him.

CrimsonSun stumbled onto the walkway only to find that the cartel members in the back yard had been taken out by soldiers. His body fell on the walkway and was out of sight from the soldiers. They were pointing their guns at him when Alvin yelled out from behind

“Don't shoot! I want to take him alive!”

The soldiers followed the command but steadied their gun sights looking for CrimsonSun. Alvin reached him and he was laying on the walkway with a pistol in his hand. He aimed the pistol at Alvin and Alvin shot the gun out of his hand. CrimsonSun lost a hand and was bleeding profusely. Alvin looked at him in the eyes and said

“It's Alvin Reed. Who are you CrimsonSun?”

Alvin kept his rifle pointed at CrimsonSun's face. CrimsonSun then said

“Alvin? It's Joseph Bradley. I'm CrimsonSun.”

Alvin hesitated thinking it was a ploy. This possibly couldn't have been Joseph, there was no way he would be this devoted to EssenceMMO. Alvin remembered that Joseph told him he had no interest in the game. Alvin pointed his gun at CrimsonSun's head and pulled the trigger. CrimsonSun's head blew apart and the player playing him was kicked offline.

The other players searched the mansion and found the devices which contained CrimsonSun's virtual credits. They secured them and transported them back to the United States. After Alvin killed CrimsonSun, he logged off of EssenceMMO and deleted his character. He was in utter disbelief. For millions of years, CrimsonSun had acquired so many credits and now was unable to protect himself. The attack was successful and Alvin had gotten what he wanted from EssenceMMO.

The next day after work, he called Joseph into his office. Joseph appeared nervous and discontent. He was upset about something. Alvin was sitting at his desk and Joseph sat across from him. Alvin asked him

“So, was that really you in EssenceMMO? Were you CrimsonSun, Joseph?”

“Yes Alvin. I was CrimsonSun.” said Joseph.

“Why were you so obsessed with that game Joseph? I thought you didn't like EssenceMMO?” Asked Alvin.

Joseph pulled his seat in and moved closer to Alvin.

“Alvin, to tell you the truth, I've been extremely envious of you. Everyone on Earth loves you. You think that you're not important anymore but you really are. People talk about you as if it was still 2030 and as if your achievements were still fresh in their minds. I never got the credit for anything, for helping start Singularitarian, for my work. That's why I made CrimsonSun. It was a way to become important again in this totally boring and peaceful place. It was a way to escape your shadow. In EssenceMMO, I could become someone important. I mattered.” Said Joseph

Alvin folded his hands and tapped his fingers then said

“You don't think being chairman of the party is enough? Why bring up what happened so long ago Joseph? Those days are gone. You are still important. You didn't need to waste all of that time in that virtual world. Was that the only thing you did after work?” Asked Alvin

Joseph swiveled side to side in his chair, nervously. He then said

“Alvin, let's face it. I was never destined to be as intelligent and gifted as you are. My efforts in protosentient AI meant nothing compared to the things you did. My company was just the convenient place for you to unleash your achievements onto the world. Playing EssenceMMO was all I did Alvin. I became obsessed like so many people on this planet. Everyone in Essence is chasing a dream of a different life. Immortality has left them jaded with this life. Living for so many years life gets boring, especially when it's perfect, when there's no challenge and no struggle. Long ago we figured out everything about reality and most people want an escape. Essence gave me that escape to be someone new, someone I could never have been before.”

Alvin responded

“Don't downplay your worth Joseph, you still matter in this universe. Singularitarian became my home and the staging ground for the technological singularity. Without your trust in me and the work of our engineers, we would have never have succeeded. A sentient AI in an anechoic chamber is only as good as the people who can build from its instructions. Don't feel bad Joseph. I apologise that I took CrimsonSun away from you, I, I shouldn't have been so focused on that. I have to admit too, I became obsessed with Essence. I wanted to become important again too, even if it was just in some fictional online game.”

Alvin got out of his seat and said

“Give me a hug dear friend. I'm sorry.”

Alvin gave him a tight hug and felt Joseph's warmth. He felt emotionally close to him now. Years had separated the two friends but now he felt that their bond was growing stronger. Alvin let go of him and sat back in his chair. He then asked

“What are you going to do now Joseph? What will you dedicate your life to besides this game?”

Joseph stroked his goatee and said

“What are you doing now Alvin? I'm not sure what I will do. I am still in love with Essence. I can't recommit myself to playing EssenceMMO, but I could still go for the individual experience modes.”

Alvin said

“I'm a poet now. I'm taking after my wife and son. The wife has been writing for years, as you know. She's published so many books, novellas, short stories it's hard to keep track. John has been very successful too. His art will be exhibited at the Louvre for the next month, I plan on going to see his best works again. His philosophy has inspired me as well, he's a very critical thinker. But as for me, I like poetry. John Milton inspired me with *Paradise Lost*.”

Joseph raised his eyebrows in surprise and said

“Wow, *Paradise Lost*? That's quite a work to live up to, what have you written so far?”

Alvin opened a drawer in his desk and pulled out *Metaparadise*. He handed the poem to Joseph and he read it. Joseph then said

“This is your first poem? I'm impressed Alvin. I guess it's about your ordeal with the Annunaki and the future of humanity huh? I think you have many great works ahead of you if you keep this up.”

Alvin felt happy that Joseph approved of his poem. Alvin then said

“Yes, this is my first work. But less about my poem Joseph, what do you want to do?”

Joseph thought for a minute and came up with an answer

“I think I'll follow in your family's footsteps. I'll become a musician. I always had a knack for music since I was a kid. I like playing the guitar. Maybe I'll join a band and we'll play an assortment of music. I like jazz in particular.”

Alvin smiled at Joseph's decision. He then said

“I'm proud of you Joseph, I am proud of your commitment to something besides that virtual world. I think you'll become a great musician. I'll come see you play your gigs when you're ready. But Joseph, I think that's enough for today. I don't want to spend any more time at the bureau than I have to.”

Joseph said

“Same buddy. I enjoyed the talk as well. Let's hang out soon and kick back a few beers, maybe smoke some pot.”

Joseph left the room and Alvin clocked out and went home. On the cab ride home he was thinking about his son's artwork at the Louvre. Alvin had already seen all of John's paintings before but he had the desire to see them showcased. He wanted to see the reactions of the visitors at the Louvre himself and to gauge his son's accomplishments from those observations.

The amount of time it would take to get to Paris meant that the trip would have to be put off until Saturday, when Alvin was off from work. At six am Saturday morning, Alvin and Lonna woke up earlier than usual to make the trek to Paris. The two took a cab to Folkestone, Kent, where the Channel Tunnel train station to Calais, France was. They boarded a train to Calais and then took a connecting train to Paris. They arrived at the Louvre around 11 am. The iconic glass pyramid in front of the Louvre was still standing even after millions of years. The museum was bustling with people and androids walking about, enjoying art.

John's works were in the Petite Galerie, a small subsection of the Louvre. The gallery consisted of three small rooms but they were packed with people. There was enough space to move around

but Alvin felt uncomfortable and distant from the paintings. He felt like the museum should have made accommodations to move the paintings to a larger exhibition room. He thought that his son would never live up to the critical acclaim of historical painters, but at least he was somewhere in a museum.

Entering in from the east end of the gallery, the first room had three paintings mounted on the walls. Alvin and Lonna looked at the first painting in the left hand side of the room. Its title was

“From Here until Beyond”

This painting was from John's early days as a painter, in his troubled years. In the foreground was a white man with black hair holding a skull. In his other hand, he had a shortsword. He was wearing a velvet doublet and breeches. He looked like a man from the Renaissance. He was staring into the skull intently. You could see a glimmer in his eyes and his distraught, wrinkled face.

In the background was a forest in flames. The painting's perspectives centralized behind the man with the skull and he was off center to the left. Alvin remembered this painting from long ago and thought the same thing as he did back then. It was a chilling reminder of the frailty of life. To Alvin, the man represented a guilty conscience pondering the life he had taken. Alvin was curious as to why nobody was speaking in the room. The atmosphere of the gallery was quiet and somber. Paintings like this one reflected back onto its viewers emotionally.

The next painting on the opposite wall behind them was called

“Pain”

This painting was gruesome and stylistic. A cartoonish figure eerily reminiscent of Edvard Munch's *The Scream* was in the center of the painting. He was grabbing his scalp and had split his head in half down to the top of his mouth. His mouth was wide open, teeth bearing and it looked like he was screaming. He was holding each half of his head with his left and right hands. The background was gray with swirling lines, reminiscent of a Van Gogh painting.

Lonna looked at the painting and whispered,

“This one reminds me of John's schizophrenia. This is probably how he felt hearing those voices and having those other symptoms. It didn't last long but I'm sure it was really scary. Just like this painting.”

Alvin whispered,

“The way I feel about *Pain* is that it represents conflict in life. The guy is literally split over something he's suffering in life. There is a sort of fog in the background, swirling about. The form of the character is representative of a surreal reality which is an impression of real suffering.”

The crowd in the room seem unphased by Alvin and Lonna's presence. The people and androids didn't say much but they observed carefully. The third painting was on the right side of the room. It had a larger canvas than the other two, measuring about 7 feet diagonally. Its title was

"Forever"

It was a picture of a wedding procession but the attendants were skeletons in clothing. The procession was at the bottom of the painting while an endless series of rolling hills filled the background. The skies were a dark gray and rain poured on the wedding. This painting was hyper-realistic and almost indistinguishable from real life. The bride and groom were standing opposition to each other, with a priest in the middle of the two.

Upon retrospection of this painting, Alvin was reminded of life before the singularity. Everyone who married on Earth committed themselves not only to love, but also to death. Life would be over in the blink of an eye and forever would be existence as a skeleton. The rain symbolized that there was no escape from nature and was a foreboding sign of the lack of control humanity had.

Lonna whispered into Alvin's ear, "Reminds me of our marriage honey."

Alvin whispered back, "Funny."

The two moved to the next room. The four paintings in this room were selected by John as a figurative jump to the next phase of his life, during and post schizophrenia. The first painting was titled

"Madness"

The painting was of a man facing away from the viewer, sitting on a stool. He was facing a blank art canvas mounted on an easel. He was wearing a black t-shirt with beige cargo pants. He had black hair and small ears. Around him were gibberish lines of text, distorted and warped with intermittent words like stupid, crazy, Hitler. Behind the easel was wallpaper with vertical dotted lines. The bottom of the wall was wood paneling and there was a red carpet on the floor.

It was obvious to Alvin that this was John suffering schizophrenia. He thought that John had suffered from it for all his life until that fateful morning when he started hearing voices. He was struggling to fight back tears, thinking that he could have prevented his son's suffering. Then he thought about John's early paintings and how impactful they were. He would have become a completely different person if he wasn't mentally ill. Maybe he wouldn't have been an artist or a philosopher if he didn't suffer. Maybe perfection wasn't perfect, maybe suffering made life worth living, Alvin thought.

Alvin said to Lonna,

“This is the moment he changed. He painted this one after hearing the voices. I believe he recognized that what was wrong in life was part of him the whole time. It made his earlier works focus on just suffering.”

Lonna looked at Alvin, frowning and said

“It's true. John recognizes himself that he changed after learning of what was wrong with him. I'm glad he got out of that phase. Life isn't about suffering, Alvin.”

To the right of “*Madness*” was a painting titled

“*Hope*”

This painting was of an idyllic landscape. A small hamlet and farm were on the left of the painting and in the background was a cliff overhanging an ocean. The colors were bright and saturated. The house was painted red and white. It had a small white picket fence and a brown roof. Cattle were grazing on grass in front of the house. In the background the shining water glimmered from the sun directly overhead.

Lonna asked , “What do you think about this one, Alvin?”

Alvin stared at the picture for another ten seconds before responding.

“I think this one is about a simpler time. It represents self sufficiency and sustainability. There's hope in existence if you can pull yourself up by your own boot straps. Agrarian living, that's how it used to be. You lived on the fruits of your labor.”

Lonna blinked her eyes staring at Alvin and said

“I think the same thing. It's called *Hope* because we can do something to change the way we live by creating a different life for ourselves. The cliff represents how close failure is and the farm is representative of our endeavors.”

The other two paintings were across the room on the opposite wall. The first painting on the left hand side of the wall was titled

“*Androids*”

The picture was of a young girl holding an android's hand, walking down a crowded street. They were in the middle of a blurred crowd, the crowd moving fast from the perspective of the viewer and away from the perspective. The android and the girl were facing front, with their backs facing the viewer. The girl was red headed and wearing a plaid dress. The colors were bright and oversaturated.

Lonna said, “I remember this one too. To me, it represents our connection with androids as being personal and loving. They do so much work for us but they have an emotional intelligence as

well. They're not just cold calculating robots. That android could crush that little girl, but he gently holds her hand. Time is slowing down while they're walking in that crowd of busy people and androids."

Alvin thought about the painting as being representative of John's life growing up. John's generation like many before it, since the 2030s, were used to the Android presence. They aren't human, but they had rights too Alvin thought. Alvin then said

"John loves androids. To me this painting humanizes them and makes them loving and caring. Pax has been around since he was a little baby. I'm sure Pax influenced this painting just as much as any other android. I like the blurring technique. I think it focuses on the central point being that mankind and AGIs can live together peacefully."

The final painting in the room was to the right of "Androids." Its title was

"The Mistress"

The painting was of John painting a woman in covered in a red satin blanket. She had voluptuous breasts which were not covered by the blanket. She was white, her hair was brown and she had a thin nose. Her eyes were brown as well. John was at an easel, painting her with the painting halfway complete. She was lying on a couch, with her head supported by her hands. The background was a victorian red wallpaper adorned with white flower friezes. Halfway down the wall was a wood panel that split the wallpaper in half.

Alvin said

"This was probably someone John had sex with and decided to paint himself painting her. Very meta, but done before. She's beautiful. If I weren't married to you I wouldn't mind plumping her a little bit."

Lonna turned to Alvin in shock and said, "Excuse me? How rude of you to say that to me. You're such a horn dog Alvin. First it's the girls in Essence and now you want to screw a girl in one of your son's paintings? Jeez. I'm not sure if this is someone John had sex with, but she is pretty. She has nice breasts. I think the redness of the background compliments the sexuality of the painting. It's very liberating."

The two then moved to the final room of the gallery. These paintings were made in the phase of John's critical acclaim as an artist. Undoubtedly, being the son of Alvin Reed had some effect on the acclaim he received, but John had his own genuine merits as an artist. This phase is what Alvin currently paints about, the topics ranging from the singularity to the future of humanity. The first painting they saw was on the left hand side of the room. Its title was

"Yesterday's Tomorrow"

The picture was of a man in a black trench coat staring out at a modern city from a mountain top. The man's back was facing the city and he also had on a black fedora hat. Clouds obscured the

lower parts of the city and large skyscrapers pierced through the clouds. The city was nestled in rolling hills and flanked by a river on the right. The lines and shapes melded into one-another. It gave the impression that the painting was one contiguous piece from the mountain in the foreground to the rolling hills in the back.

Lonna had folded her arms, looked to Alvin and asked, "What do you think dear? This is a new one. John must have painted this one recently."

Alvin stroked his chin and said, "My first impression is that this seems familiar. It reminds me of one of those paintings from the Romantic period. You know what, let me look up that painting and see if this is what it reminds me of."

Alvin took out his phone and searched for a painting with the description

"Man looking from the top of a mountain painting."

In the internet search results, the exact painting he was thinking of came up.

"Wanderer above the Sea of Fog"
by Caspar David Frederich

Alvin showed the phone to Lonna and her eyes widened. She then said, "It looks awfully similar Alvin. Did he steal the idea? I, I don't know what to say. I feel ashamed that this is his renowned work but it's really just a derivative work of Caspar David Frederich."

Alvin held the phone up to John's painting and compared it with Frederich's. It looked the same in theme, but there were obvious differences. The city, the blending of shapes and lines, the rolling hills and the man were all different.

Alvin sighed and said, "I mean, maybe he did it as an homage to Frederich. I guess what they say about there being nothing new under the sun is true. I'll give him a pass. It seems to be substantially different enough that it's not like he was passing off the original as his own work. It's a modern take on a romantic classic."

Lonna looked blankly at Alvin, blinking and said "I don't think he should have copied him. I guess it's alright if everyone thinks it's different, but I expect better out of John. Maybe the modern take on an old classic is better than the classic but I don't see it that way. Frederich's work was genuine and from the heart."

Alvin and Lonna moved to the next painting on the right of "Yesterday's Tomorrow." This painting was titled

"Beyond this Realm"

It was a painting of a cruiser ship accelerating beyond light speed. In the middle of the painting was the ship.. A giant panoramic cockpit window led to an aerodynamic body design with caved

in wings and a rectangular cargo area. In the background, the stars smeared across the canvas as lines giving the impression of a snapshot of a ship moving at high velocity. In front of the ship was a large worm hole that was colored purple and blue. It had an aura around it and the inside was a chromatic mixture of blue and purple.

Alvin looked at this painting and thought of the progress humanity had made since the twentieth century. He was awestruck by the fact that we had broken the light speed barrier. He turned to Lonna and her eyes were scanning the painting, inspecting its details. Then Alvin said,

“What do you think Lonna? I enjoy this one. It reminds me of the greatness of humanity and how far we have come. It leaves an impression that nothing is unattainable for us, if we can go beyond light speed and travel across the universe, we can do anything.”

Lonna turned to Alvin and said, “I like the way the stars are smeared across the canvas. It looks like it's traveling so fast. It makes me a little nauseous, it gives me the impression that I'm actually moving too. The colors of the wormhole are pretty. It looks like a portal into another dimension.”

Alvin and Lonna moved to the right side of the room where the final two paintings were. The third painting on the left side of the wall was titled

“Spinning Vortex”

This was a modern take on the religious figure of the Buddha. In the middle of the painting was Buddha sitting cross legged. He had his right thumb, ring and pinky fingers touching with his middle and index fingers in the air. Behind the Buddha's head was a halo, with his head split open and a vortex of energy emerging from his head. The buddha's clothes and the background of the painting were covered in gold leaf. The painting shimmered in the light and the vortex was sparkling.

Alvin looked to Lonna with a large grin on his face and said

“I know what this one is about. John told me before. He was on LSD one time when he had this exact feeling. He felt like a giant vortex was sucking his soul out from his head and that it was split wide open. He said he felt a great amount of fear and timidity but he learned to let go. It must have been a real enlightening experience.”

Lonna gave Alvin a concerned half titled smile and said

“That's what enlightenment is? Taking LSD? I don't like it when John is on drugs. The painting is beautiful and everything but I don't think drugs are necessary. This life was meant to be lived without drugs Alvin. I feel conflicted. On one hand if it helps John unlock his potential I guess it's okay. On the other hand I feel like art shouldn't have to rely on drug use if it's good on its own merits.”

Alvin looked back at Lonna and said

“Hmph. I think that's awfully hypocritical Lonna. You smoke pot all the time. Not even the old style, but the upregulating stuff. You often smoke before you write.”

Lonna then said,

“I don't want to get into an argument about this here Alvin. You sure as well know that weed isn't as strong as LSD. It's barely even a drug at all. I know it's hypocritical. But he's our son. I feel like he should be able to do it without drugs.”

The final painting was to the right of “*Spinning Vortex*” its title was

“*One*”

It was a painting of a spaceship pilot staring at a massive singularity from the inside of the ship. Looking out from the panoramic window, the singularity encompassed the entirety of the window. The cabin crew were seated and everyone's back faced towards the viewers of the painting. From the bottom of the cabin was an open bay with a walkway leading to the singularity. Alvin scanned the painting with his eyes and struggled to hold back tears. He then said

“John foreshadowed the end Lonna. This is what it's all going to come down to. This is the singularity at the end of time. I guess I'm the spaceship pilot and everyone else in the cabin is who I love and care about. It's hard not to cry thinking about this painting Lonna. It's tearing me apart inside.”

Lonna said


“We're going to die Alvin at some point. It's only inevitable. We're just delaying our fate. What matters is that we're trying to make it right. The singularity at the end of time will give us a chance to be reborn again. Well, hopefully at least. The next universe, the next life, will never be the same. It's our only chance Alvin.”


Today's trip to see John's paintings missed the entire point of coming. Alvin didn't know whether the crowds in the rooms were scared of saying anything but they kept quiet around him and his wife. He wanted to gauge the public's opinions of his son's works. He didn't know whether they were good on their own merits or if he was in the Louvre just for being Alvin's son. They left the museum after seeing the paintings and had a night out in Paris. They arrived home around 12 am and fell asleep.

Chapter 8: Forever

January 25th, 81,000,000

At year 50,000,000 Mars's moon Phobos was predicted to crash into the surface of the planet¹⁸. Gravitational tractors kept the moon in a steady orbit to keep the colonists on the planet safe. The Californian coast tectonic plate had been subducted under the Aleutian trench.¹⁹ All along the west coast of the former United States and Canada, people had abandoned the cities and moved

¹⁸  Bills, Bruce G.; Gregory A. Neumann; David E. Smith; Maria T. Zuber (2005). *"Improved estimate of tidal dissipation within Mars from MOLA observations of the shadow of Phobos"* (PDF). *Journal of Geophysical Research*. **110** (E07004).

¹⁹  Garrison, Tom (2009). *Essentials of Oceanography* (5 ed.). Brooks/Cole. p. 62.

inward where less tectonic activity was occurring. This process of migration took place slowly so not as to disturb the economy of the west coast and the lives of the people living there. New cities were built inland to accommodate the large populations.

As tectonic activity settled, large numbers of people moved back into California despite the government's warnings of future catastrophe. They assumed that they could just leave once again and that cities would be built if they needed to leave. Around this time, the African continent collided with Europe and closed the Mediterranean Sea²⁰. A large mountain chain was formed with peaks rivaling Everest. The populations of Europe migrated towards the steppes of Asia until tectonic activity had slowed down. Northern Europe managed to stay intact but the Mediterranean was completely abandoned. Again, against the government's warnings, people moved back into Europe where they thought it was safe to live.

Erosion had caused the Appalachian Peaks in America to disappear²¹. The valleys in the region deepened with wind and water erosion. The Canadian half of the Rockies had weathered away to a vast plain²². Since the ecosystems remained in equilibrium through humanity's bioengineering, lower animals on the planet fed into the life cycle of those ecosystems. The vast amount of biological remains decomposed over the millions of years and created vast deposits of fossil fuels²³. Humanity no longer directly required the use of fossil fuels, but once reserves were replenished, they were harvested, stored and used in small quantities for easier material production.

Across the galaxy, similar geological events were occurring on the inhabited planets. When the situations arose, humans took the same precautions and actions on those planets as well. Alvin's responsibilities as a galactic administrator dwindled over time. The autonomous administrators of the colonized planets by now had vast amounts of resources and technologies to deal with these crises themselves. The once crippled space fleet which destroyed the Annunaki homeworlds became immensely huge. The colonised planets fielded their own militaries and space fleets. If the other two alien races would decide to go to war now, they would be massively overpowered. A war would never happen however, since humanity kept strict watch on the aliens.

Alvin had never seen the galaxy with his own eyes. For millions of years, he remained fearful of space flight and travel. Today he had made the commitment to visit the planetary colonies and to

²⁰ "Continents in Collision: Pangea Ultima". NASA. 2000.

²¹ Hancock, Gregory; Kirwan, Matthew (January 2007). "Summit erosion rates deduced from ¹⁰Be: Implications for relief production in the central Appalachians" (PDF). *Geology*. **35** (1): 89. Bibcode:2007Geo....35...89H. doi:10.1130/g23147a.1.

²² Dethier, David P.; Ouimet, W.; Bierman, P. R.; Rood, D. H.; et al. (2014). "Basins and bedrock: Spatial variation in ¹⁰Be erosion rates and increasing relief in the southern Rocky Mountains, USA" (PDF). *Geology*. **42** (2): 167–170. Bibcode:2014Geo....42..167D. doi:10.1130/G34922.1.

²³ Patzek, Tad W. (2008). "Can the Earth Deliver the Biomass-for-Fuel we Demand?". In Pimentel, David. *Biofuels, Solar and Wind as Renewable Energy Systems: Benefits and Risks*. Springer.

visit the alien races. At the Political Bureau, he called Joseph into his office. Alvin sitting at his desk saw Joseph come in and greeted him.

“Hello Joseph. I have something very important to tell you today.”

Joseph sat down and said

“Yeah? What's going on Alvin?”

“I want to visit the colonies and the alien races. I feel like I need to see them before I die. I want to see what I've created. It's important for me Joseph to go on this journey. There's so much to see in this galaxy. I want to be awestruck by the wonders of the universe. I am putting you in charge of galactic affairs while I travel the galaxy. I plan on being gone for ten years. That's how long I've calculated it would take me to reasonably see the galaxy, visit the colonies and the alien races,” Alvin said.

Joseph seemed shocked by Alvin's sudden change in plans.

“Didn't you fear space flight? If anything happens to you do you want me to assume the role of General Secretary?” Asked Joseph.

“Yes Joseph. I used to fear space flight but I've changed. I can't stay on Earth forever while the rest of the galaxy lives on without me being there directly. The people need to see who gave them the singularity and what got them to this point. I feel like they are distant from Earth and by visiting at least once, I will bridge any divides between humanity. Once I clock out from work I will be gone. You're in charge now Joseph for the next ten years. If anything happens to me, you will become the new General Secretary.” Said Alvin.

“Understood Alvin. Godspeed. May you achieve your goals of galactic unity. Bring back some pictures from your journey.” Said Joseph.

“You're dismissed Joseph. Your work will start tomorrow.” said Alvin.

Joseph saluted Alvin and left the room. Alvin called the secretary of war and informed him of his decision to leave Earth. The secretary ordered a fleet of ten thousand ships to escort Alvin across the galaxy. Alvin left his office to the broadcast studio in the Political Bureau on the second floor. There, he informed the news crew of his plans. He stood in front of a green screen which in production editing, had an image of the Milky Way on it. Alvin was now being broadcasted to the entire galaxy including the alien planets.

“Greetings denizens of the galaxy. This is Alvin Reed, the General Secretary of the Milky Way. I am announcing that over the next ten years I will be visiting every inhabited planet in the galaxy. I am excited to see the people of the galaxy and how far we have come. Joseph Bradley, chairman of the Communist Party will assume the responsibilities of General Secretary while I am traveling. I hope to see you soon.”

Alvin saluted the camera and the broadcast feed faded to black. Alvin thanked the broadcast crew. Alvin called Lonna and a government vehicle picked her up from Buckinghamshire. After Lonna arrived they made their way for the Space Corps base in Coningsby, 143 miles north from London. After an hour flight in a government owned flying car, he arrived at Coningsby. There pilots and crews were making arrangements to start the journey. Alvin entered a ship with Lonna and took a seat in the circular cockpit of the ship.

Above Earth, ten thousand ships including Dreadnoughts and fighter class ships took formation awaiting for Alvin to join the fleet. Alvin sat back in his chair waiting for takeoff. He became nervous and started to sweat from the anxiety of his first space flight. Lonna looked at him and said

“It's okay dear. Don't worry, everything is going to be alright. If anything happens there are escape pods in the cargo bay and ten thousand ships with us. If any disaster happens, we can make our way back to Earth safely.”

Alvin didn't feel consoled by his wife's remarks. He lied to her and said

“Thanks Lonna. I feel better knowing that.”

Beads of sweat trickled down his forehead. For the next ten years, he'd be gone he thought. He was excited to see the wonders of the galaxy and its people. This trip was a long time coming he thought. After a half hour of preparations, the ship took off.

The ship took off vertically then reoriented its engines so the cockpit window faced the atmosphere. From the panoramic cockpit window, the burning particles in the atmosphere blurred across the field of view. An orange-red fog covered the window. In two minutes, the ship reached the space fleet. Alvin's ship flew to the front of the formation with ships flanking and behind him. This put him in a precarious position if he was attacked but he wanted it this way. He wanted to see the galaxy without ships obscuring his vision. He thought to himself how improbable attack was and of how he had survived the initial ascent.

“See, that wasn't so bad now was it Alvin?” Asked Lonna.

Alvin stopped sweating and was relieved that he survived the beginning of the journey. The ships made their way for the colony on Mars, the only other inhabited place in the solar system. Within twenty minutes, after traveling at three times the speed of light and decelerating, they arrived at Mars. There Alvin planned to spend a day greeting the administrators, the people and seeing the sights of Mars. The people held celebrations for Alvin when he arrived at the planetary capital of Mars Ultima. Mars now resembled Earth with a thick artificial atmosphere and Earth like biology.

He stood in a convertible car in a giant parade held in his honor down the main street of the city. He waved towards the people and they threw flowers to him and Lonna. After the parade was over, he spoke to the administrators and headed off to see Olympus Mons. In his ship, they hovered next to the largest mountain in the solar system. He was amazed at how large it was in

comparison to the cities around it. After visiting Mars, the fleet headed for the wormholes at the front of the Solar System.

Over the next five years, celebrations across the star systems took place in Alvin's name. He grew tired of participating in the same type of events over and over but he knew the people loved him. So far in his journey, he saw so much hope in the galaxy. The people were blissful and happy to be alive forever. For the five year anniversary of his trip, he decided to take a detour and visit the astronomical wonders of the galaxy. The first stop was the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way galaxy. Emerging from a wormhole near the center of the galaxy, the fleet came within a safe enough distance to view the black hole. Within 50 AU of the black hole, it was calculated that would be a safe viewing distance due to the dark energy drives providing resistance to the black hole's gravity.

The ship orientated in a top down view of the black hole. The massive black hole was only visible due to the ring of dust surrounding it. It was siphoning eons old dust from the galactic center. Due to the distance from the black hole, it appeared static, since light would take 400 minutes to reach the ship.

Alvin stood in front of the panoramic window with Lonna. He commented

"It's amazing. That black hole is billions of years old. It's holding this entire galaxy in place. Everything in the Milky Way orbits it. What a wonderful sight."

Lonna turned to Alvin and said

"What about at the end of time? How are we going to convert the black holes into matter that won't devour the singularity?"

Alvin put his arm around Lonna and said

"We'll figure out a way. We always have. I think if we can tear the black holes apart with enough dark matter and dark energy, this will effectively invert them inside out. The matter inside will be lost however."

After viewing the black hole for half an hour, Alvin directed the crew to the next destination. The next stop was the biggest star in the galaxy, ZX Nova. The star was centered in the Eagle Nebula, 10 kiloparsecs from the Galactic Center. The star was 1710 solar radii, with a volume 5 billion times larger than the sun. The star's outer photosphere was a massive 5.2 AU. This distance is comparable to the distance from Earth to Jupiter at the middle of their orbits.

The fleets's shielding was adequate for the massive radiative output of the star. They stationed at 5.8 AU but could not stay for long. The star from onboard sensors and nanobot probes seemed stable, but a large solar flare could happen anytime. An extended stay in the radiation of the star would overload the heating shields. Alvin with this information in mind, planned a visit of thirty minutes.

Even an appreciable distance from the photosphere, the newly formed star was massive. The cockpit windows dimmed to protect the viewers from the radiation. Alvin stood up and looked out to the giant star with his wife.

“Look at the prominences and the sunspots. Doesn't it feel like it's alive Lonna? It's expanding, contracting. It's almost like it's breathing, while fusing all of that hydrogen and helium,” said Alvin.

Lonna looked out at the vision encompassing star and said

“It's beautiful. It won't be here for long though. It's a red supergiant. In a few million years it'll go supernova and it will be a long time until we see another star this big. I can feel the heat coming from it. This cabin was much cooler than before we got this close to it.”

Even with the dimmed cockpit window, the light and heat permeated into the ship. Soon after their first observations, they left the star system for the next wonder of the galaxy, Geminga. Geminga was an average pulsar neutron star in the constellation Gemini but what made it special was that it was one of the earliest neutron stars discovered in human history. Geminga was 2.146307 kiloparsecs from the Eagle Nebula. They arrived within half an hour using the wormhole network.

What was critical was the placement of the fleets. If the fleets were hit by the rotating electromagnetic beams of the pulsar, it would cause severe damage to the hulls of the ships. These particles were as powerful and energized as any weapon of space warfare. The magnetic and gravitational field of the dense star could be overcome by the ships's propulsion systems so that was of no concern. Unlike ZX Nova, the minimum safe distance to orbit the star was much lower due to its high density and lower luminosity. The fleets parked .3 AU from the star out of the way of the rotating electromagnetic beams.

Alvin and Lonna looked out towards the star. With a constant rotation of 237 milliseconds, the star was spinning quite fast. Alvin remarked

“It looks like a lighthouse. It's spinning so fast. It must be so dense in the core of that star. The gravity on the surface would pancake our bodies instantaneously.”

Lonna had folded her arms resting her hands on her forearms and said

“Unlike VX Nova, this one will be around for a long time. The neutrons will take at least ten billion years to decay and expel the star's mass in those electromagnetic beams.”

The visit ended after a half hour of analyzing the star and taking pictures of Geminga. The last stop on the tour of the galaxy was the Milky Way's largest quantum supercomputer. The computer was stationed in the constellation of Cancer, a short distance from Gemini. They used a wormhole near Geminig to get to the super computer. In the Zeta Cancri C star system, there were two large binary stars which powered the super computer.

As the fleet came into proximity of the stars, the star sized supercomputer came into view. It was a massive metal sphere pulsing with blue energy. Across its surface, maintenance shafts led into the heart of the computer. In a stable orbit with the two stars, the supercomputer formed a triangle formation with the stars. Connected to the supercomputer and stars were .05 AU length cables which transferred energy from the stars to the computer.

The fleet remained stationary .10 AU from the trinary system. Alvin and Lonna looked out to the computer. Alvin said

“It's computers like these make things like Essence possible. So many of our calculations would be impossible if we didn't have these computers. I feel bad for the disembodied AIs in the computer. They have no idea what it feels like to have a form beyond this substrate. This computer was built so long ago that I hardly remember the news of it. It's good that it's still running.”

Lonna then said

“It amazes me how our new physics works. Back in the twenty first century they said that information couldn't be passed through quantum entanglement. All it took was a different perspective on how to utilize that property of quantum mechanics. The way we identify the spin of particles led us to knowing the states they were in. It's not like we have the actual data but the trickery we use to extrapolate that information is interesting. What a marvel.”

Alvin had his fill of observing the galactic wonders. He thought that the rest of the galaxy was insignificant and homogeneous throughout in terms of astronomical wonders. After these visits, he continued his good will campaign across the inhabited planets of the galaxy. Humanity had occupied 20,000 planets for eons. In the first five years he saw 10,950 planets, averaging around 6 planets per day.

Like the first half of the trip, the mood across the other planets was jovial. To visit so many planets in a day Alvin was restricted on time. Flying, docking, disembarking and taking part in press conferences gave him about an hour of time on each planet. There was no way one man could reach out to trillions of people and androids. He tried but everything blurred into his mind.

The faces he had seen, the cityscapes, the planet wide civilizations all resembled Earth. The galaxy had become an amalgamation of heavenly planets full of people with a passion for life. After a day of visiting planets in the eastern quadrants of the galaxy, Alvin arranged a meeting with the alien races. Today, he was going to meet the Draconian leader Yaolath and the Android Gray leader Verus. The three arranged to meet on the Android homeworld of Zolum, in the Zeta Reticuli star systems.

Outside of the planet's orbit was a massive human fleet. This fleet had been monitoring the Android Gray homeworld since the end of the last war. To discourage suffering of the humans and androids aboard the fleet, the ships and crews were rotated

at regular intervals. Alvin's escort fleet arrived early in the day for the meeting and made contact with the monitoring fleet. Down below, the planet looked like a giant mass of metal. Android cities and landscapes were dominated by alien electronics and photonics.

Alvin's escort fleet docked in the capital city of Zolumia. From there, Alvin was escorted with security teams of humans and androids into the Android Gray government administration complex of the Zolumia. He was flown into the complex with a carrier plane brought in from the escort fleet. From what he saw, the planet was devoid of any natural life. The cities were labyrinthian and complex. Spiraling towers and metal buildings filled with electronics and photonics connected the androids to their planet. Only Android Grays walked the streets.

The government complex was in the middle of the city. It was a square shaped complex with streets and metallic buildings. Once the androids saw him and his crews arrive, a delegation of androids met him at the front of the complex. They escorted him to the main administrative building in the center of the complex. The building was foreign and strange to Alvin. He was used to human structures and human ways of living. Biologically based necessities like water fountains and bathrooms were nowhere to be found.

In the lobby of the complex, androids stared at Alvin and his security team. Most of these Android Grays had never seen human beings in the flesh before. Biological life forms were novelties to them. Alvin was dazed by the flashing lights and signs in the alien android language in the lobby. In the middle of the lobby was a large metallic door leading into the main conference chamber. The chamber was a large auditorium filled with Reptilians on one half and Android Grays in the other half of the auditorium.

Alvin was escorted down the stairs of the auditorium to a semi circle shaped table. On the left end of the table, Yaolath sat with an Android translator standing next to him. On the right side of the table, Verus sat alone. The middle seat in the table was reserved for Alvin. He took his seat and his security team stood by near the table next to the front row of seats in the auditorium. As Alvin sat down, he thought of how uncomfortable the metal seat was. Androids didn't care about comfort he thought, that was something way beyond their intellect.

The Reptilians and Androids in the room were speaking and observing Alvin. Verus then spoke into a microphone on the table

“The meeting will begin. We welcome the General Secretary of humanity, Alvin Reed, to Zolum. Now, Alvin, tell us why you have come here to speak with the leaders of the galaxy. I hope it is not to declare war or to announce our extermination.”

Verus laughed nervously, mimicking a human sense of humor. Alvin seemed unphased by the remark and found it saddening. He then said

“Greetings aliens. I have not come to announce your demise at the hands of humanity. I have come with olive branches in hand to offer peace and reconciliation. I am traveling around the galaxy to visit its inhabitants on a tour of goodwill. I want to discuss with you how life has been

under the auspices of humanity. Verus let's start with you. How is your race doing? Do you need anything from us humans?"

Verus pulled his seat in and spoke into the microphone while staring at Alvin.

"We feel betrayed Alvin. We sacrificed everything for humanity and the way you repaid us was by quarantining us and the Reptilians. All of this must be some sort of sick joke you're playing by coming here and speaking to us. What is it that you really want? Is it to mock us? To deride us for not doing more to raise you to prominence? What sort of reconciliation are your xenophobic attitudes towards us? Humanity has segregated the only sentience in the universe into two camps. Humans and aliens. To you we are just aliens. You think nothing of us beyond that."

Yaolath spoke next in his Reptilian tongue. His forked tongue thrashed about as he spoke. His android translated for him and directed Yaolath's words to Alvin.

"Yaolath says that he shares the same sentiment as Verus. Humanity has too much power and it has isolated itself from the galactic community. Since 2032 in Earth's calendar years, humanity has done nothing but instigate violence and push xenophobia. Our Reptilian brothers and sisters thought so much more would come out of saving humanity than what has happened. While you preach of paradise and happiness for humanity, we alien races are suffering in fear. We live day to day with the over looming threat of human armadas in our skies. We live day to day with our hands out begging for resources. We cannot survive with you and we cannot survive without you. Why have you done this to us Alvin?"

Alvin was shaken by the words of both Verus and Yaolath. He struggled to come up with a reasonable explanation for why humanity was xenophobic. The rest of the points seemed moot to him, the leaders seemed to him as if they were children questioning a parent's authority. Alvin looked out at the auditorium full of aliens and thought that they looked upon him with suspicion. He could feel the distrust in their gazes and silence. He then said

"Is it not enough that we let you live without suffering? Surely we give you the resources to live but humanity cannot trust your races. We have taken the role of guardians of this universe to protect those living in it, not to fight them or destroy them. The Annunaki assumed this role themselves but could not enforce it due to their beliefs and practices. They did not believe humanity was capable of much more than it has accomplished and they could not destroy the alien races even with their might. We will not make the same mistake again by giving you more freedom.

We are sorry it had to come to this, but no human wishes to associate with the other life in this galaxy. It is true we are xenophobic. We see you as strange and motivated towards different causes than the ones humanity advocates for. We are not so uncaring to take life away from you however. We see that there is enough space in this galaxy and enough resources in this universe to sustain our races without conflict. This meeting was disappointing. I will accept a few more comments then I am leaving. I wished to have heard admiration and appreciation for the things humanity has done to sustain your races."

Verus then said

“This meeting was not fruitful at all Alvin and has done more to divide us than bring us together. It is a shame that humanity and the alien races could not unite in harmony. Instead we are divided in shame and dishonor. Until the end of time it shall be this way because you decree it to be so. I doubt that you speak for all of humanity when you say you do not want the races to commingle. You are simply projecting your own fears and insecurities on us. What you say is far from the truth.”

Yaolath spoke and his translator relayed the message to Alvin.

“Yaolath says he is deeply disappointed as well. It is a shame that we could never unite our races as Verus said. We had so much hope for humanity, Alvin. I'm done with my statements.”

Verus spoke into the microphone and said

“This meeting is adjourned. We have nothing more to say to you Alvin. You're not welcome back here ever again.”

Alvin was taken aback by Verus's last sentence. He thought of how hypocritical Verus was being. He wouldn't welcome Alvin back on his home planet but required humanity to provide his androids with resources. Alvin forgave Verus in his mind. He would honor his word to provide resources and stay at peace with the races.

Alvin and his escort fleet left Zolum to continue his mission across the galaxy. Over the course of the next five years, he visited the rest of the inhabited planets and left an indelible impression on humanity. When he arrived home, celebrations were held in his honor. Many across the galaxy thought of Alvin as a gentle and kind person. He became human and more than just a face to the inhabitants of the galaxy.

Alvin was the hero of time everlasting. He brought the singularity to mankind and forever would humanity exist in gratitude to him. On the first day back to the Political Bureau he gave a speech in the main assembly room. In attendance were all of the galactic administrators and the other secretaries. He took a stand at the podium and said

“Greetings fellow administrators and secretaries. I wish to congratulate you on the excellent job you did while I was gone. For ten years, I saw with my own eyes the people of this galaxy that we represent. I saw the special things that have made humanity great. I saw the faces of trillions of happy and enlightened souls. I experienced what the results of our hard work amounted to.

We suffered many great catastrophes on our journey. It was unfortunate, that many eons ago that billions of human and alien lives were lost to warfare and destruction. We have prospered tremendously since those trying times and have succeeded in entering a new phase of our journey. Today, as we have been tasked in the past, will continue in guiding humanity towards a

future of boundless hope and peace. We are forever more, until the end of the universe, in a golden age.

This golden age is a time where man and the universe unite. We have become one with the universe and shall never fall into destitution. It is our righteous obligation to insure as we march onto the future that humanity's success knows no limits. I have seen what we have done so far and it is all because of the work we have done, together. I thank you for letting me go on this journey and I hope that many of you do the same."

As soon as Alvin finished his speech, he was given a standing ovation from the people who had assembled there. They clapped for two minutes straight, howled and whistled at Alvin. The goodwill campaign was a success and Alvin had strengthened the bond between the bureau and humanity. Alvin called the room to order and finished by saying

"Now, since you ladies and gentlemen are all riled up, let's get back to work and finish the day strong! The galaxy needs us!"

April 4th, 240,000,000

An exosolar asteroid²⁴ had been detected with a trajectory towards Earth 140 million years prior. This asteroid was fifty miles across and capable of destroying all life on Earth. Gravitational tractor fleets captured the asteroid and towed it down to Earth. From there, its resources were harvested and used in production on Earth. Around this time, the rings of Saturn had been knocked out of their orbits²⁵ and were sent barreling towards the planet.

A new breakthrough had occurred with casimir engine technology. Previously, to acquire dark matter, large masses of hydrogen had to be used. Now, the energy of the vacuum itself could be tapped into to acquire dark matter and dark energy. The breakthrough would allow for the end goal of nucleogenesis, the creation of hydrogen for the singularity at the end of time. The universe consisted of 95% dark energy and dark matter. After the star formation of the universe had completed and the regular matter expended, new baryonic matter could be created with the vast amounts of dark energy. This dark matter and energy would have to be conserved wisely however, it would need to last until the end of the universe to fuel the Milky Way and expedite the contraction of space time into the singularity at the end of time.

This didn't seem to be too much of an issue. There was simply so much dark matter and energy that it would come down to precise management of those resources. Over the course of $10^{10^{120}}$ years, the depletion of this dark energy and matter would increase the gravitational pull of baryonic matter. Instead of the universe's natural tendency to expand because of dark energy and matter, it would attract gravitationally. This would reduce the energy requirements necessary for the final singularity by letting the universe do most of the work itself.

²⁴ Nelson, Stephen A. "Meteorites, Impacts, and Mass Extinction". Tulane University.

²⁵ Lang, Kenneth R. (2003). *The Cambridge Guide to the Solar System*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 328–329.

For the next eighty million years, engineers on Earth worked on increasing the speed of Earth's rotation. The decreasing speed of rotation would have added an extra hour of time in the solar day²⁶. To fix this, large amounts of dark matter and energy were harvested and mounted to space poles which extended beyond the atmosphere. The dark matter and energy propulsion was so powerful that it managed to increase the speed of Earth's rotation.

Fifty million years later, it was theorized via Lyapunov time that the orbits of planets would become unpredictable and chaotic²⁷. There was so much sheer computational power on Earth and in the solar system that this no longer became a problem. Science and mathematics had become as precise and accurate as it could possibly ever be. The invention of gravitational tractor fleets fixed any issue of irregular orbits as they could simply tow the planets back into stable orbits around the sun.

Across the universe, resource acquisition and transportation continued. Andromeda had been depleted of planets and heavy metals. Now, humanity began to draw from other galaxies in the local group. Entire planets had been broken down and materialized into raw goods for use in consumer products across the galaxy. All that remained in Andromeda were large gas clouds, stars, and black holes.

Today, Alvin was resting at home. Unlike his son, he was never much of a philosophical inquirer. A thought had struck him while he was lying in bed with his wife. What if nothing existed? He tried to think of the complete absence of anything. He visualized in his mind a white room, then a black room. Still, these thoughts couldn't quite get him to the place where nothing existed. He then thought of how language ruins this thought experiment. To think of nothing, one must not think at all. There has to be a void of thoughts, a natural nothingness.

Suddenly, he felt strange. For a split second, he felt what it felt like to wirehead, but naturally. He felt blissful, he felt unencumbered by reality. He tried desperately in the next few moments to feel what he had felt in that split second. Thinking about this one thought blew his mind. For the next few minutes, he tried thinking of the concept again. It was no good, it he could not get that same feeling.

He began thinking heavily about the logic behind the question. If nothing existed, it is a paradox. It is asking if no thing exists as if to imply there is nothing at all in the universe, but that state of nothingness is a state of existence. In a sense, even if there was nothing at all in the universe, it still exists. There was no way around the question. If nothing exists, something exists, he thought. Even this state of nothing, was still something. He thought about his son John and the philosophical work he had done.

He went to his desk and started writing down his ideas. His wife looked at him and asked

“What are you doing Alvin? Come back to bed.”

²⁶ Illian Scudder. "How Long Until The Moon Slows The Earth To A 25 Hour Day?". *Forbes*.

²⁷ Hayes, Wayne B. (2007). "Is the Outer Solar System Chaotic?". *Nature Physics*. **3** (10): 689–691. [arXiv:astro-ph/0702179](https://arxiv.org/abs/astro-ph/0702179). Bibcode:2007NatPh...3..689H.doi:10.1038/nphys728.

Alvin responded,

“Hold on dear. I just got a brilliant idea. I need to write it down before I forget it.”

Lonna asked,

“A brilliant idea? About what?”

Alvin then explained,

“If nothing exists, something exists. This means there are three states to the universe. Nothing exists, something exists and everything exists. Therefore if nothing exists, something will still exist.”

Alvin had his back turned to Lonna and he could not see her face. She looked at him like he was crazy, with a deadpan expression. She started laughing uncontrollably. She said,

“What are you talking about Alvin? Did you smoke some weed or something? You sound high.”

Alvin swiveled around in the chair, looked to her and said

“You won't believe it Lonna, but for a split second I think I reached Nirvana. For the first time in my life I think I meditated. I purged my mind completely of thoughts when I asked myself, what if nothing exists? I then thought about nothing as hard as I could and I felt strange for a second. It felt like wireheading. It was blissful. It blew my mind!”

“Oh. That's interesting. What does that imply about reality Alvin?” asked Lonna.

Alvin stroked his chin and said

“Well we know from physics that even the vacuum has quantum mechanical properties. The vacuum fluctuates. It has the ability to create big bangs of matter and energy. It has been proven that this matter comes from other universes. We've observed those universes. It essentially means that the vacuum itself is an intrinsic property of every universe. Everything comes from nothing. No matter what we do, there will always be something that exists.”

A thought came into Alvin's head. Was this entire goal of creating the singularity at the end of time necessary? Lonna was on his wavelength, thinking the same thing. She asked,

“What about the singularity at the end Alvin? Do we need to accrue all the matter in the universe?”

Alvin thought about the question some more for a minute or two and gave an answer.

“Yes. I think so. If we don't sustain this universe we might get a universe from quantum fluctuations with a different set of physical laws. It might not be able to sustain life like it has in this one.”

“It's unfortunate. We can't escape it Alvin. Death is inevitable.” said Lonna

“I know it is. It's so long from now my love. Don't worry. I'll be right back. I'm going to get some chemicals from the garage to wirehead. I want to chase the high. It felt so good.” said Alvin.

Lonna became concerned and said,

“You never wirehead Alvin. Are you sure you want to do it?”

“Yes. I'll be right back. Don't bother me when I come back, I need to meditate.” said Alvin.

Alvin went into his garage to get base elemental compounds. He got a quarter cup of nanobots and assembled the wireheading drugs he needed. He also decided to fabricate a high dosage of psilocybin, a 5 mg dosage of the antipsychotic risperidone and a .5 mg dosage of alprazolam. He was taking psilocybin because he wanted to slow down his meditation. The time dilating effects of psilocybin would make it seem like he was wireheading into eternity. The risperidone and alprazolam were just in case the psychedelic trip was too strong. He could cancel it any time he wanted and the nanobots would take the drugs directly to his brain.

He went back into his bedroom and sat down on the floor. He popped the wireheading drugs in his mouth and activated his nanobots. Then he took a psilocybin pill and instantaneously the drugs hit him. He closed his eyes and then again thought, what if nothing exists? He felt the immense pleasure of the wireheading and became blissful. The psilocybin kicked in and time slowed down to a crawl. He could feel in his perception that time was slowing down. A second lasted years, a minute a lifetime.

The synergy of the psilocybin and the wireheading drugs brought him beyond ecstasy. He was feeling the rapid onset of the psilocybin's psychedelic effects. In his mind strange thoughts, alien questions and delusions intermingled with the pleasure of wireheading. He thought to himself that maybe he shouldn't have done this at all. The potency of the psilocybin was increasing by the second. Behind his eyelids he could see fractal phosphenes and absurd geometries.

Lonna looked at him as he sat cross legged on the floor, with his eyes closed. She was lying in bed with a look of nervousness.

“Alvin, please, come back to reality. I'm scared that you'll lose yourself with this wireheading stuff.”

Alvin heard his wife speak to him and she sounded foreign to him. He was distant from her at this moment. Alvin thought to himself that he was at one with the universe. He was bonding with the state of being and sinking into it. The phosphenes behind his eyes changed into Aztec

inspired imagery of interlocking circles and friezes. He meditated for a few minutes, losing himself in the psychedelic geometries behind his eyes. Rolling waves of euphoria overtook him. Alvin got up and grabbed a bottle of water on his bedroom desk.

He took the risperidone and alprazolam with some water and within a minute the effects of the psilocybin ceased. He then deactivated the wireheading nanobots and they flushed the wireheading drugs out of his brain. He looked at his wife and said,

“It was wonderful.”

He looked at his phone to see how much time had passed. Only ten minutes went by.

“Wow. It felt like a thousand years had passed. I'm done with that for now. I felt connected with the universe Lonna. I just needed to experience that feeling again.”

Lonna said,

“ You should write a poem about your experience Alvin. I'm sure everyone will love it.”

Alvin then said,

*I will. The title I've come up for this one is *Nothing*.”

Lonna giggled at Alvin and said

“Great, a poem about nothing. Get started on it Alvin, while you have the weekend off!”

Alvin nodded his head quickly in agreement. He got back into his computer chair and took out a sheet of paper and a pen. He wrote down the title first.

“*Nothing*”

Alvin was much more proficient as a poet after millions of years of honing his skills. The first line came to him in an instant. Then he spent fifteen minutes thinking of the rest of the poem. When completed, it read

“Nothing is something.
I gave up nothing for all.
Everything is what this world will bring
From the peak I can only fall.

Nothing is everything.
Of this I am sure
This song I sing
Everything is nothing but I want more.”

Alvin swiveled around in his chair and read the poem to Lonna. She smiled and said

“I like it Alvin. But don't you think it's a little short? I'm sure you could write more than that.”

Alvin looked at his writing and then looked back at Lonna. He then said

“It is short, but that's how I want it. Not every poem has to be five or ten stanzas. Haikus are short and nobody complains.”

“But that's the format of a haiku, Alvin. I guess if you're satisfied with it you should keep it. Good job honey. Now, come back in bed and snuggle your wife.” Said Lonna.

Alvin put the poem on his computer desk and went back to bed with his wife. He was done with his revelatory philosophy and writing for today. He felt the warmth of Lonna's body and smelled her sweet feminine scent. He thought of his impulsive choice to wirehead and take drugs seemed psychotic. It was strange for him to do any drug other than cannabis. He doubted whether or not that brief moment of bliss the first time around was really nirvana.

The next day, he woke up and went to the Political Bureau for work. After an hour of work, he visited Joseph at his office. Joseph was busy typing on the computer when he saw Alvin come in.

“Alvin what's up?” Joseph said.

“I just wanted to talk to you. See how you're doing. I've been curious how the new band is doing, you've been playing the guitar for a long time now.” Alvin said.

Alvin then took a seat in front of Joseph.

“I switched it up Alvin. I've been playing the trumpet in our band. Say Alvin, we're playing tonight at a dive bar in London. Do you want to come see us? It'll be the usual stuff we play, swing jazz, smooth stuff,” Joseph said.

“I'd be delighted to Joseph. I also want to talk to you about something that happened yesterday at my house.” Alvin said.

“Sure, what is it Alvin?” Joseph said.

“I was thinking of this idea, what if nothing existed? For a brief second, it felt like I was in nirvana. It felt as blissful as wireheading. I couldn't recreate the feeling but I wireheaded afterwards.” Alvin said.

“Wow. I never knew you were deep into philosophy like that. Your son is the philosopher I'm always hearing about. So what did you learn from that experience?” Joseph said.

“Nothing is a state of existence. If nothing exists, something still exists. Therefore nothing is something. There will always be something that exists. The vacuum itself has physical quantum

mechanical properties. It's important that we get the universe we want by creating a singularity at the end of time. This universe may have different physical laws after the quantum fluctuations from the vacuum. We don't want that," Alvin said.

"That's deep Alvin. That kind of thinking is a fundamental way of looking at reality. It's interesting how you came up with those notions philosophically and then backed it up with empirical evidence. Language is funny like that, sometimes what you say intends to say one thing explicitly but ends up saying something else entirely. Nothing is something. Great." Joseph said.

Alvin took out his phone and looked at the time.

"We're still on the clock Joseph. Another two hours until we're done. What's the name of the bar and where is it at Joseph? Also what time are you playing?" Alvin said.

"Ah, right. The bar name is Mists, it's at 42 Falstaff Road in London. We'll be playing from 8pm to 10pm. Come by around 7:30, we'll be smoking pot in the back of the bar. The jazz musicians around here and in my band always smoke before a session. It gets the energy flowing, it lets you make connections in music. See you tonight Alvin." Joseph said.

"Will do Joseph. See you later." Alvin said.

Alvin left the room and went back to work. Two hours later he clocked out and went home. The rest of the day he spent writing poetry and relaxing with his wife. At 6pm he got dressed in a dress shirt, cardigan and slacks. He wore a nice pair of dress shoes. He invited Lonna to come with him but she said she wasn't in the mood to go. She wanted to sleep in. Alvin left around 6:30 and arrived at the bar at 7:20.

Out front of the bar, the Mists logo was in blue-light blue gradient block lettering. The glass windows were tinted black from the outside but one way see through from the inside. As Alvin walked in the bar, the smell of strong cannabis hit him. To the left of him, was the bar and assortment of drinks. There were fifteen stools lined up with patrons sitting at them. Adjacent the bar on the left hand side were big booth seats, full of people. The booth seats were also on the right hand side of the bar. Small circular tables with three seats per table filled the middle of the bar. In front of these tables, were four rows of chairs which were partially filled. Alvin walked up to the front row of seats and placed his cardigan on a seat in the middle of the row.

As he was facing the stage, he scanned the back of the bar to see which room the cannabis smell was coming from. The band's equipment was already on the stage. On the left hand side were two bathroom doors and an employees only door. The one door on the right hand side said "Stockroom." He went to it and walked in.

There was Joseph and his band, sitting on large crates and chairs. The room was small and filled with shelves of various items a bar would stock up on like napkins, coasters and glasses. The band was already smoking weed and rolling up another big blunt. Joseph saw Alvin walk in and said

“Hey Alvin, what's up man? Sit down, we're about to roll up and smoke this blunt. We've already got one in rotation. Here, take a hit man.” Joseph said.

Joseph handed Alvin the blunt and he took two big hits. He inhaled deeply and held his breath for five seconds to let the smoke be absorbed by the alveoli in his lungs. He passed the blunt to a bandmate on his right and let out the smoke. The room was foggy and dense with smoke. Alvin looked at Joseph's bandmate who was sitting and leaning over onto a crate, filling blunt papers with weed.

“What kind of weed is it? Is it the upregulating stuff?” Alvin said.

Joseph grinned and said

“Of course it is. We wouldn't smoke that old shit, it's not potent enough.” Joseph said

Joseph looked towards his bandmates and said

“You remember my band right? You know Jamie, Chris, Samuel and John right?”

Alvin scratched his head and said

“Gee man, it's been so long since I've seen you guys play. Remind me what instruments you play again?”

Jamie spoke up first.

“I play the drums.”

Chris then said

“I play double bass.”

Samuel with a finished blunt in hand said,

“Guitar.”

John said

“I'm the pianist”

The first blunt was halfway smoked when the second one entered rotation. The first one reached Alvin at the same time the second one did. He held one blunt in each hand and took a hit from both one after another, making a silly face. The group laughed uncontrollably at the face Alvin made. Despite Alvin's seriousness in his work and accomplishments, he was still human too. He could bring the joy to people just in the way he acted.

He handed the half smoked blunt to the right, to John and the new blunt to Joseph. He was getting incredibly high. The thing about upregulating cannabinoid receptor cannabis is that it does more than just upregulate. It created new receptor sites in the brain and exponentiates the high the more you smoke it. The psychedelia from the cannabis was incredible. He saw the room breathing and visual hallucinations of smiling cartoon faces. The psychedelic chasm of vibrating colors in his vision that was typical with this type of weed came back in full force.

His vision was vignettied by pulsating colors of blues, purples and pinks. Alvin, Joseph and the band mates finished the blunts in ten minutes. Alvin thought that he was the highest he had ever been in his life. This was way too much weed to smoke. They left the stock room and Alvin took a seat in the front row. The patrons were staring at them and the wafts of smoke billowing out of the room. In the back a random guy gave a thumbs up and he had a joint in his hand as well.

It was 7:40. The band set up on stage and got ready to perform. Alvin decided that he wanted a drink and went to the bar to order one.

“What'll you have?” Asked the bartender.

“Give me three shots of house whiskey and a medium sized draft light beer.” Alvin said.

Alvin was incredibly high and now he wanted to get drunk too. The bartender poured out the shots and a medium sized beer. Alvin downed the shots in a few seconds and went to his seat with the beer. The bartender gave him a look of disappointment, frowning, probably thinking that Alvin was going to be sloppy tonight. That wasn't the case. Alvin was gonna ride out the high and drink when he was sober, not extremely drunk. These three shots and beer would get him tipsy for an hour or two and then he would head home after the band stopped playing.

Alvin took a sip of the beer and placed it in the cup holder on the right side of the seat. An employee from the bar went to the microphone on the stage and said

“Welcome ladies and gentlemen. Our first guests playing tonight are The New Melodies. The band has been around like many of you for millions of years. They specialize in swing jazz. It's because of bands like these that we can preserve our ancient human culture and music. Tonight they have a set list of music and towards 9 pm they will be improvising for you live. Welcome The New Melodies!”

The bar turned to the band and clapped for them loudly. Alvin was clapping as well. He was feeling warm from the liquor and beer. At this point he was stoned out of his mind and getting higher. Joseph went to the microphone and said

“This is our first song, *A Night's Wonder*. ”

Joseph assumed a position on the left side of the stage and began playing. The band played together harmoniously. The drum set's cymbals gave Alvin the impression of rain pattering on a window pane as the drummer kept the time in the song. The tempo of this song was lightning

fast, with Joseph leading on the trumpet. Joseph and the other players exchanged solos throughout the song.

Throughout the night, the band played their set list and the atmosphere in the bar was jovial. People were enjoying their drinks and having fun. In the improvisation session the band riffed off one another and Alvin was impressed. He looked at Joseph with a new impression of him. Here he was, in a state of flow with four other band members and he was working beautifully. It was almost as if there's was a connection between them that unified their playing. Alvin was impressed that Joseph had turned his life around from his addiction to EssenceMMO and was now on the world stage as a successful musician.

The effect of the four drinks and weed on Alvin had diminished by the time the band stopped playing. At the end of the improvisation session, the band stood up on front of the stage and bowed. They received a minute of applause and then the next band had prepared to take the stage. Alvin met up with Joseph to the side of the stage and said

“Great performance Joseph. I really loved it. I haven't heard such a great jazz band play like that since I was in my twenties, so long ago. It's amazing what you've done my friend.”

Joseph gave Alvin a hug and said

“Thanks Alvin. It means alot to me that you still believe in me and support everything I do. We'll be friends until the end and I mean it Alvin.”

“See you tomorrow at work Joseph. We've got to get to work early but we'll finish early.” Alvin said.

Alvin left the bar and took a cab home. As he got into bed with his wife, he thought of the wonderful performance Joseph put on. He told Lonna and she still wasn't that interested. He fell asleep ready to continue the week at the Political Bureau.

January 1st, 600,000,000

At year 240,000,000, Earth's solar system orbited the galactic center²⁸. At year 250,000,000 the continents of Earth merged and formed Pangea Ultima²⁹. This wouldn't be the last time plate tectonics caused a supercontinent to form, but the effects were devastating. By year 50,000,000, Eurasia and Africa had already formed one large continent. In 250,000,000, massive migrations across the planet were made to new cities deep within the supercontinent, away from the coastlines.

Humanity's fate as it moved towards the future would be one of movement and migration. Although it took hundreds of millions of years to come to this point, it was constantly thought

²⁸ Leong, Stacy (2002). "Period of the Sun's Orbit Around the Galaxy (Cosmic Year)". *The Physics Factbook*.

²⁹ Scotese, Christopher R. "Pangea Ultima will form 250 million years in the Future". *Paleomap Project*. Retrieved 13 March2006.

about and prepared for millions of years in advance. Whole cities and infrastructures were destroyed and had to be rebuilt. The Political Bureau moved into the heart of the supercontinent, in former Africa, to avoid disruption in the administrative and political process of managing the galaxy. A spot was chosen in Sub Saharan Africa, away from the tectonic plates which were likely to split the continents apart again.

250,000,000 years later, these arrangements proved to be vital. The cities and infrastructure across the continents were designed to accommodate for the shifting tectonics. The supercontinent had broken up and new continents formed once again. The problem with the plate tectonics was that ecosystems could not adapt naturally to the changes. Humanity was constantly forcing its hand in an unnatural and cruel process. The species of microorganisms, plants and animals were modified to survive in new environments. As continents shifted, rainforests and other ecological habitats were created at the latitudes proper for a sustainable Earth ecosystem.

This meant that over the course of those 250,000,000 years, entire habitats had been wiped out and regenerated in new places. The animals which were not human were in a constant primal state of life, death and reincarnation. At year 600,000,000, a gamma ray burst hit Earth³⁰. Due to the geostationary absorption grid built many millions of years ago, the gamma ray burst energy was contained and used to power batteries across the planet.

The tidal acceleration of the Moon had pushed the Moon closer to Earth causing a lack of solar eclipses³¹. The problem with tidal forces would be that in enough time, the moon and planet would become tidally locked. This would cause a permanent high tide and low tide on opposite sides of the planet. Gravitational tractor fleets moved the Moon further from the planet into its 21st century orbit to prevent this happening in the future.

The increasing brightness of the sun was going to effect the carbon-silicate cycle³². This would have caused photosynthesis to cease with decreased carbon dioxide output from volcanoes and weathering from the luminosity. The increased heat from the sun would have caused water to evaporate and stop lubricating the rocks which caused plate tectonics. To avoid all this, the absorption grid above the atmosphere filtered the increased luminosity to keep it at safe levels.

Alvin and everyone he knew moved to Africa. He was living in a new suburban neighborhood in New Mantia, a new region in the middle of the continent, near the subtropics. On New Year's Day of year 600,000,000, his son had come to his house to celebrate. John Reed had come early in the morning to stay the day with his mother and father. At lunch, they had a discussion together.

Alvin was sitting at the opposite end of the table and his wife next to him. He said to John,

³⁰ Minard, Anne (2009). "Gamma-Ray Burst Caused Mass Extinction?". National Geographic News. Retrieved 2012-08-27.

³¹ "Questions Frequently Asked by the Public About Eclipses". NASA. Archived from the original on 12 March 2010.

³² Heath, Martin J.; Doyle, Laurance R. (2009). "Circumstellar Habitable Zones to Ecodynamic Domains: A Preliminary Review and Suggested Future Directions". [arXiv:0912.2482](https://arxiv.org/abs/0912.2482)

“So, let's talk about kids John. You've been adamant for so long that you don't want kids. Why? Why haven't you found someone to love yet? You always drift between women, hedonistically enjoying life. Don't you want some love and affection in your life?”

John was part way into eating a cheeseburger when he put it down and said

“Yup. I don't want kids Dad. This world, life in general is just too much to bear. It's too much to bear that we're going to die at the end of the universe and there's nothing we can do about it. I don't want to bring someone into this world with that on my mind. And about a wife, I just don't want that either. I love sex and I love women. I don't want that commitment in my life.”

Alvin was becoming upset at his son, he was growing frustrated that millions of years had left him unchanged. He then said

“Back in my day son, we had actual things to worry about than just the end of the universe. There was real pain and suffering. A real fear of death that would come in fifty or sixty years. You have it so good John. I don't understand your argument or the logic behind it. And the reason for not wanting a wife is to have sex with different women? Don't you ever get lonely John?”

John ate more of the cheeseburger in-between his dad's talking. He then said

“I do but the commitment is too much. I can have a girlfriend with an open relationship that will still provide me with what I need. Marriage is old fashioned. Humans aren't meant to be tied down. We're meant to roam free and procreate with as many beautiful people as we want to. I don't want to talk about this anymore. You're never going to change my mind.”

Alvin replied,

“For an esteemed philosopher like yourself you seem awfully vain. I think you'll change your mind in time John. I want you to experience what it feels like to be a parent. I want grandchildren, John. So does your mother. She would love to have a grandchild.”

Lonna looked up at John from the table and said

“Please consider it honey. We think you would make a great parent. Life is so beautiful now. It's nothing like it used to be, that old world is long gone. You'll never know what it felt like to live back then John.”

John finished eating his meal and said

“I'll think about it. I don't think it's going to happen though. I love my life the way it is.”

The rest of the day was jovial and the topic of John having children was avoided. At 10pm, John left Alvin's home to party with his friends and to find a girl for the night.

Chapter 9:

The God That Never Came

June 1st, 3,300,000,000

Time was moving ever faster. Billions of years had passed and the limits of planet Earth were being reached. The only thing that sustained Earth was an artificial attempt to save it. At year 800,000,000, carbon dioxide levels were supposed to have fallen so far that C4 photosynthesis would have been impossible³³. Due to the saving of the carbon-silicate cycle and the maintenance of the atmospheric gases, this never happened.

At year 1,000,000,000, the sun's brightness had increased 10%³⁴. This had no effect on Earth. The absorption grids increased the strength of their atmospheric filters to accommodate for the increased light. The increased photon output was harvested and used as a source of passive solar energy. Throughout the time period between year 600,000,000 and 3,300,000,000, the continents had shifted, formed supercontinents and broken up many times. Humanity had no means of

³³ Franck, S.; Bounama, C.; Von Bloh, W. (November 2005). "Causes and timing of future biosphere extinction" (PDF). *Biogeosciences Discussions*. **2** (6): 1665–1679. Bibcode:2005BGD.....2.1665F. doi:10.5194/bgd-2-1665-2005.

³⁴ Schröder, K.-P.; Connors Smith, Robert (1 May 2008). "Distant future of the Sun and Earth revisited". *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. **386** (1): 155–163. arXiv:0801.4031. Bibcode:2008MNRAS.386..155S. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2966.2008.13022.x.

effecting the plate tectonics of the planet without disrupting many other dependent geological processes. They were forced to relocate, build and restart over many times.

By year 1,300,000,000, due to the lack of predicted carbon dioxide, eukaryotic life was predicted to die off³⁵. This never happened and in fact, all forms of life on Earth were thriving. To fuel the consumption requirements of the planet and its ecosystems, entire planets from various galaxies had been dematerialized into base elements. These base elements were used by nanobots to create artificial biological molecules and life itself. Humanity balanced the ecosystems with injections of biological material and life forms to keep the cycle of life continuing on the planet.

When year 1,500,000,000 came around, it was predicted that the habitable zone of the Earth would have been pushed further back in the solar system³⁶. This was predicted to happen because of the sun's increasing brightness. It didn't happen and Earth remained in the same orbit it had for billions of years prior. The levels of carbon dioxide were supposed to increase on Mars as well. By this point, Mars was completely terraformed and its atmospheric composition was similar to that of Earth's. Mars had plate tectonics like Earth as well, and continents formed over time. The same preventative measures occurred on Mars as did Earth.

At year 2,300,000,000 it was predicted that the outer core would stop spinning due to the slowing down of Earth's rotation³⁷. This never happened because of the dark energy sails that were attached to the Earth many years ago. The Earth's magnetic field stayed in place and there was no risk posed to the planet. 500 million years later, the increasing luminosity of the sun³⁸ was increasing the temperature of the absorption filters over Earth. It was estimated that without the absorption filters, temperatures on the surface would have reached 300 degrees Fahrenheit.

During year 3,000,000,000 it was predicted that by then, the moon would have increased its distance from Earth³⁹. This would have effected the stability of Earth's axial tilt but this did not happen. This didn't happen because since year 600,000,000, gravitational tractor ships had kept the Moon in orbit close enough to Earth. At year 3,300,000,000, there was a 1% chance of

³⁵ Franck, S.; Bounama, C.; Von Bloh, W. (November 2005). "Causes and timing of future biosphere extinction" (PDF). *Biogeosciences Discussions*. **2** (6): 1665–1679. Bibcode:2005BGD.....2.1665F. doi:10.5194/bgd-2-1665-2005. Retrieved 19 October 2011.

³⁶ Franck, S.; Bounama, C.; Von Bloh, W. (November 2005). "Causes and timing of future biosphere extinction" (PDF). *Biogeosciences Discussions*. **2** (6): 1665–1679. Bibcode:2005BGD.....2.1665F. doi:10.5194/bgd-2-1665-2005. Retrieved 19 October 2011.

³⁷ Waszek, Lauren; Irving, Jessica; Deuss, Arwen (20 February 2011). "Reconciling the Hemispherical Structure of Earth's Inner Core With its Super-Rotation". *Nature Geoscience*. **4** (4): 264–267. Bibcode:2011NatGe...4..264W. doi:10.1038/ngeo1083.

³⁸ O'Malley-James, Jack T.; Greaves, Jane S.; Raven, John A.; Cockell, Charles S. (2012). "Swansong Biospheres: Refuges for life and novel microbial biospheres on terrestrial planets near the end of their habitable lifetimes". *International Journal of Astrobiology*. **12** (2): 99–112. arXiv:1210.5721. Bibcode:2013IJAsB..12...99O. doi:10.1017/S147355041200047X.

³⁹ Neron de Surgy, O.; Laskar, J. (1996). "On the Long Term Evolution of the Spin of the Earth". *Astronomy and Astrophysics*. **318**: 975. Bibcode:1997A&A...318..975N.

Mercury's orbit gaining eccentricity⁴⁰. This would have caused Mercury to collide with Venus or hit Earth. Mercury was towed by gravitational tractor ships into a stable orbit around the sun.

In the city of New Mantia, Africa, Alvin and Lonna had met with their son on the weekend off from Alvin's work at the Political Bureau. They arranged to meet at a park on a warm summer day. Alvin had not seen his son in a long time and was becoming worried about him. He wanted to reconnect with him and talk about life. Alvin and Lonna were sitting on a park bench when they received a call from John.

"Where are you Dad? I'm here at the northern end of the park." John said.

"I'm in the middle of the park, near the lake. I'm sitting on the bench near the western road of the park. You'll find me. Use your phone to find me with GPS coordinates. You're not too far from me." Alvin said.

John reached his mother and father in the middle of the park two minutes later. Alvin got up from the bench and gave his son a tight hug. Lonna did the same as well.

"Hi Dad. How are you?" John asked.

Alvin looked into his son's eyes with his hands on his shoulders and said,

"I'm good my son. How have you been? It's been so long since I've seen you. You barely keep in touch with your mother and I."

"I'm sorry Mom, I'm sorry Dad. I've been so busy just living life, enjoying every minute of it. There's a lot of work that needs to be done. Paintings to be painted, philosophy to be written about. You know the deal." John said.

He gave his mother a tight hug as well.

Alvin and Lonna sat down on the bench and John followed. Alvin turned to his son and leaned sideways on the bench with his arm supporting his head and said,

"That's no excuse to not talk to us John. Even a few minutes every week would be enough. We know you want to live your life. Tell us a little more about what's been going on. It's been almost three weeks since you've said anything to us."

John smiled and said

"You won't believe it but I found a girlfriend I want to marry. She's so special to me that I want to put my promiscuous ways behind me. I've been working on a new treatise as well along with

⁴⁰ "Study: Earth May Collide With Another Planet". Fox News. 11 June 2009. Retrieved 8 September 2011.

some new paintings. I titled the treatise *The God That Never Came*, it's about why God doesn't exist and how I've used evidence to support it.”

Lonna peered over Alvin to the right to look at her son and said

“That's too much at process all at once John. Tell us about this new girl first. What's her name? Are you sure you're going to marry her? Why didn't you bring her here? This is big news!”

“Her name is Isabella Perez. She's been around for a long time, she's a girl from my generation. She's beautiful and petite, with a nice nose and body. She smells so good. She's sweet, caring and loving. The reason she didn't want to come today is because she's shy. She'll come meet you guys soon though. Maybe next week we'll come visit you two. I promise.”

Lonna was blushing and smiling. She then said,

“Well damn son! It's about time. And what about grandchildren, are we going to see any with this Isabella? Hopefully her name will be Isabella Reed soon, isn't that right honey?”

Lonna looked at her husband smiling. She put her hand on his shoulder and then John said

“Well, we will see about that. She wants kids. I'm still undecided but I've mulled over it for a long time. I wouldn't mind having kids, a little shitter running around. They'll be happy in this universe. Things are great now.”

Alvin looked at his son and said

“Now tell us about your new philosophical work. It sounds interesting. You have proof for God not existing? Or is it more of a philosophical inquiry?”

John then said

“Maybe I misspoke. Proof is too high of a standard. I have been researching and postulating why God has never shown up. The treatise is about the natural state the universe is in. In the universe that we live in, if God existed, he would be brutal. Life is full of natural suffering and brutality. Between every species that isn't symbiotic, evolution has proven itself to be every species for itself. I wrote about the fallacious thinking, history and logic that arises when God is theorized to exist.”

“Tell us more about it John,” Alvin said.

“Yeah, so, throughout the history of mankind religion has dictated a lot of moral and philosophical debate. The question wasn't necessarily if God existed, but what laws does God mandate. God as a monotheistic entity didn't become a popular mainstay of belief until Judaism. There is the first contradiction of the authority of God. God was created as a manmade construct to explain the mysteries of the universe. In the historical narrative, other arguments arose like the first mover argument.

Philosophers like Aristotle proposed that the universe due to causality must have a first mover or a cause to that universe. There are various faults with this logic but the main two are the proof we have through science and the infinite chains of causality. If God caused the universe to exist, what causes God to exist? We have discovered through physics that other universes exist and that our universe goes through a Big Bounce each time it collapses to form a new universe, with new laws. This infinite chain of causality is an intrinsic property of the metauniverse itself but not of a deity--”

Alvin interrupted his son and said

“I've heard stuff like this before. Is this supposed to be new philosophy? What's different about your treatise John?”

“Well let me finish! The metauniverse cannot be caused by a deity because of this infinite chain of causality. What was discovered is that although it seems like there is an infinite chain of causality through big bounces, the energy of the metauniverse will decay and stop this process. It simply means that we are here without God and that we simply exist. The rest of the treatise talks about the implications of living in a universe without a God,” John said.

“Give us some of those implications. You don't have to flesh out everything, but let's hear a sample” Alvin said.

“Ultimately it means that we must rely on one another to succeed here in the universe. There is no moral being higher than the self. Humanity is the protector of the universe. It is upon us to make sure we live peacefully and justly. There is no heaven and there is no hell, there is only this place. We are here forever. This reality is what we make it. We must become the God that never came” John said.

“Fascinating son. It's so wonderful that you've developed such a love for philosophy. Your mother and I, we both loved science. I guess science wouldn't exist without philosophy but we never were as committed to it as you are. Your insights are revelatory” Alvin said.

Lonna chimed in as well.

“I agree with your father. It's profound to know that God will never come to this place and doesn't even exist. It gives the universe so much more mystery that can't be answered. We are here forever and always will be. We are a symptom of reality. It chills me to the bone,” Lonna said.

The three hung out for another half hour and then headed home. When Alvin arrived home, the reality of his son's philosophy was beginning to sink in. God never existed and would never come to this place. Without the two singularities, there would be no hope for humanity. The technological singularity and the singularity of energy at the end of time were all humanity had left. It was up to humanity to take God's place and make the universe whole again.

Alvin sat down at the kitchen table and poured himself a glass of whiskey. The sobering reality of what was to come depressed him greatly. Things would never be the same again and he would be stuck here forever. He would reincarnate as some other creature or possibly live the same life again as the universe restarted. He drank four shots of whiskey in one gulp. The drink burned his throat and he waited for the effects to kick in. In a few minutes, he was tipsy.

His vision blurred and he saw his wife in the living room on the couch. There she was, as beautiful as ever he thought. He sat next to her and gave her a drunken kiss.

"I love you so much." He said.

Lonna smelled the alcohol on his breath and said

"Why are you drinking honey? Are you depressed by what John said? It will be so long until we die. Don't worry. We still have time."

Alvin put his right arm around his wife and laid his head between her breasts and said

"Billions of years have passed Lonna. Billions. It won't be long now until the end comes. There we'll be, in front of the singularity at the end of time. Everyone we know except enough people to pilot a few ships will be dead. We'll be dead soon enough. There's no God, there's no hope. We're stuck here forever Lonna."

Lonna caressed her husband and rubbed his hair. She then said

"Don't worry dear. We came from this universe out of chaos, I'm sure we'll arise out of it again. Things change honey, that's just life. Be happy that we defeated nature's challenges and managed to live so long anyway. We were supposed to live for 100 years, not until the end of time. We did it honey. We succeeded."

Alvin looked up at his wife and said

"At least John's found someone to love. Isabella Perez. Soon to be Isabella Reed. Perfect. We'll have some grandkids soon, I know it. That alleviates my depression somewhat. The picture he showed us at the park of her is beautiful. We're going to have beautiful grandkids, Lonna."

"Yes dear. That will be great. We don't need God in our lives. We've got so much love in this family that we'll be just fine. We'll be fine." Said Lonna.

Alvin was getting extremely turned on by his wife and had sex with her right there, on the couch. They finished making love and Alvin was still tipsy. He went into his bedroom to sit at the desk and write another poem. He decided that he wanted to write about his experience with his son and the talk on God. He decided to name the poem

"Lost God"

Like he usually did, he mulled over his choice of words. He crumpled up drafts of poems, crossed out lines and filled several pages before he settled on the words that spoke to him. In its final iteration, the poem read

“From chaos I came to be,
There is no God in me.
To chaos I will return,
A different fate I yearn.

Our God is lost, this is destiny
This physical universe, for eternity
I am chained to my soul, I am not free
I did not ask to be.

Our God is lost and we must go
To find another home, to know
I am forever young but feel old,
The universe will grow cold.”

Alvin felt satisfied with the poem and put it in his desk drawer. His wife was sleeping on the couch, in her underwear. He went back to the kitchen and sat down at the table with the bottle of whiskey. He poured out another two shots in a large glass and raised the glass. Under his breath he said,

“Cheers to you nonexistent God.”

July 2nd, 5,000,000,000

1,500,000,000 years ago, the increasing luminosity of the sun was taking a toll on the Earth's absorption filters. Without the filters, water vapor in the atmosphere would have increased by 40%⁴¹. This combined with a 40% increase in luminosity from the sun would have caused Earth to skyrocket to 2,420 degrees Fahrenheit. To circumvent this problem, another five sets of absorption filters were added above the Earth. These filters were connected in layers and relayed solar energy to batteries connected in the filter grids. Due to the inverse square law, energy transmission rates fall off with the square of the distance. Direct transmission of electrical energy was impossible without massive losses so batteries were used .

Photovoltaics on Earth's surface captured the residual energy from the filters to power most activities on Earth. At year 3,600,000,000, Triton, Neptune's moon, passed through Neptune's

⁴¹ Hecht, Jeff (2 April 1994). "Science: Fiery Future for Planet Earth". *New Scientist* (1919). p. 14. Retrieved 29 October 2007.

Roche limit⁴². Due to losses in orbital velocity and increasing tidal forces from Neptune, the planet fell through the limit and disintegrated into a ring around the planet.

400,000,000 million years later, Andromeda collided with the Milky Way in a controlled fashion⁴³. Gravitational tractors and observation of the galaxies steered planets, stars and other large masses away from inhabited planets of the Milky Way. The merger proved to be useful for humanity in terms of resource acquisition. Although most of the planets and heavy metals of Andromeda were now depleted, gas clouds and stars still remained abundant. Star formation and supernovas were occurring all the time.

Elemental heavy metals, nonmetals and gases were harvested from the Andromeda merger. Newly formed stars were transported to areas without stars, with dead stars and solar systems which needed new stars. All of the galaxies of the local group were on a collision course due to their gravitational attraction since the early days of their formations.

At year 4,800,000,000, Earth was running into a massive problem. The Sun was going to exhaust its main supply of hydrogen at 5 billion years and evolve into a red giant⁴⁴. This would swallow Mercury and Venus whole and doom life on Earth. A quest began in the local group and the newly formed Milkdroveda galaxy for a main sequence star like the Sun. After scanning the vast reaches of Milkdroveda, a G type sequence star like the Sun with the same mass was found. It was found in the North Western quadrant of the galaxy, close to Earth.

Its age was determined to be 1 billion years old, relatively young for a star of its sequence type. The solar system it was in had no planets and only remnants of a gas cloud orbiting the star. Gravitational tractor ships transported the star into the vicinity of Earth. The problem with transporting stars was that their massive gravitational fields would disrupt the barycenters of nearby solar systems and Earth's solar system. The star was enclosed in a bubble of space maintained by dark energy which would negate long range propagation of its gravity. The same was done for the Sun. The sun was transported to that location and Earth now had a new sun.

Within sixteen minutes of the arrival of the new star, the absorption grids above Earth were made transparent to let in a normal amount of light on the planet. Now only the top two filters were working fully to stop and absorb gamma ray bursts. The issue of plate tectonics remained constant on Earth. Earth's population shifted to and from the new centers of supercontinents and divided continents. Supercontinents had formed and divided twenty times since Pangea Ultima.

⁴² Chyba, C. F.; Jankowski, D. G.; Nicholson, P. D. (1989). "Tidal Evolution in the Neptune-Triton System". *Astronomy and Astrophysics*. **219**: 23. Bibcode:1989A&A...219L..23C.

⁴³ NASA (2012-05-31). "NASA's Hubble Shows Milky Way is Destined for Head-On Collision". NASA. Retrieved 2012-10-13.

⁴⁴ Schroder, K. P.; Connon Smith, Robert (2008). "Distant Future of the Sun and Earth Revisited". *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. **386** (1): 155–163. arXiv:0801.4031. Bibcode:2008MNRAS.386..155S. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2966.2008.13022.x.

New Mantia was still around due to its location in the heart of Africa. John and Isabella had long been married and had a child named Alfonso. Alfonso looked like a hybrid of John and Isabella. He was 6'2 feet tall, strong and handsome. He had a prominent square jaw like his grandfather, Alvin. He had black hair, olive tan skin, brown eyes and a sharp thin nose. Today Lonna had been with John, Isabella and Alfonso.

Alvin throughout the billions of years had made a commitment to dedicate his life to something else besides Essence. He dedicated himself to the day to day work of administration, his wife, family and poetry. Alvin was still susceptible to indulgences like any normal human was. When his wife was away, he would plug himself into Essence and have the time of his life. Essence to him represented what was missing from the state of existence that immortality brought. Wireheading could make him feel blissful, but it couldn't give him things to do. It couldn't give him a reality which seemed plausible and natural.

In the morning hours after work, he immersed himself back into Essence. The temptation of virtual reality was too much. Slumped in his chair, his body was in New Mantia but his mind was in the quantum computing grid dispersed across the planet. He was greeted by the familiar gray lobby and the options of experiences.

He would never set foot in EssenceMMO again after taking out CrimsonSun and always preferred to create his own experiences. He chose the second option to create his own experience and said in game,

"I want to be a child again. Harvest my memories and take me back to my childhood. I want to be at a park with my father. Make the weather clear and warm, I want a nice spring day. Start my experience!"

In game, Alvin was transported into the alternate reality. He was at the entrance of Taylor Park, in Millburn New Jersey. He was holding his father's hand and the sun was shining down on him. His father looked at him and said

"I know how much you wanted to come to the park and play today. We're here Alvin. It's Saturday. Enjoy yourself. Get some exercise. Meet some new kids today and behave yourself! Try not to hurt yourself okay?"

Alvin couldn't believe it. He was a billions year old man in the body of a five year old. He still had all of his mental faculties and extreme intelligence. The one thing that was different was that he was immensely happy. The rush of joy a five year old would feel he felt now.

He looked out into the vast expanse of the park. This park was part of a large reservation with other parks within it. He let go of his father's hand and started running towards the kids park near the entrance. His father was chasing after him yelling,

"Alvin! Wait! Your old man can't keep up with you! Please son, stay with me!"

Alvin stopped and turned around. He felt something reverberate deep in his soul. His father was getting older and so was he. The world Essence created was so indistinguishable from life that Alvin had to look at his left arm touchscreen to break the illusion. The blue glowing Essence utility screen embedded in his arm reminded him that this wasn't really real. His father was okay in real life and he was just old here, in this experience.

After a minute of walking with his father, they reached the kids park. The park was full of children and adults playing. Adults sitting on benches with newspapers passed the time while their kids played. Some adults were with their kids, pushing them on swing sets and watching them play with other kids. Alvin looked towards the swingsets and said,

“Daddy! Let's go play on the swings!”

Alvin wasn't role playing that he was a child. The illusion, when not broken, was so ingrained in his mind that he actually spoke like a five year old. What was ambiguous was if this was really a memory he had. Was the quantum computing network really capable of extracting memories so far in the past from Alvin's brain? Alvin seemed to believe this event was exactly what he remembered from his childhood. The dejavu he felt bordered on theoretical absurdity, if this was a memory and he had control of his actions, was he really living out the memory or was he creating a new experience?

The thought left his mind as quickly as it came. He got to the swing sets and three were left open. He got on one and looked to his dad right behind him. Alvin then said,

“Daddy! Daddy! Push me, push me so I can go high up!”

“Okay Alvin, but not too fast. Make sure you hold on tight so you don't fall off.” Max Reed said.

Max gave his son a push and Alvin swung a few feet forward on the swing. Alvin swung back and his father pushed him again. Alvin felt the air whoosh by him and it was pleasurable. As he swung back and forth he looked between the ground in the sky. He was having a lot of fun. After playing on the swing set for a few minutes, he said

“Dad, stop! I wanna play on the jungle gym.”

The jungle gym was one hundred feet away to the right of the swing set. Max walked with Alvin towards the jungle gym and Alvin ran to the top of the jungle gym. Alvin wasn't so concerned about talking to simulated kids in this Essence experience. He avoided the other kids and headed for the monkey bars. He swung from each of the bars and jumped down back to the ground.

Alvin then ran back up to the top of the jungle gym and slid down the slide. He was exhilarated by the natural exercise he was getting. Alvin looked at the time on the Essence utility screen embedded into his left arm. It was 12pm. His wife wouldn't be back for at least four or five more hours. He still had a lot of time to enjoy with his father.

He looked at his father, who was watching him climb and slide down the jungle gym slide. His father came up to him and said

“Enjoying yourself Alvin? Do you want to play with the frisbee I brought?”

Max had a yellow frisbee in his right hand. By this point, Alvin was very sweaty and excited. Alvin said

“Sure dad. Let's play with the frisbee, I'm getting bored of the jungle gym.”

The two walked out of the kids playground onto the grass of the park. Alvin ran sixty feet away from his father and his dad threw the frisbee to Alvin. They threw the frisbee back and forth to one another for about ten minutes. Alvin ran up to his Dad and said

“What time is it Dad? I want some ice cream and some water, I'm thirsty.”

Max looked at his wrist watch and said

“It's 12:45 son. Let's go get some ice cream and a few bottles of water. A boy like you has gotta stay hydrated for all that exercise you're doing.”

The two walked eastward towards the park's restaurants and convenience stores. When they arrived, the park plaza was set up in a cul de sac. In the middle of the cul de sac curve was an ice cream shop named Cool Treats. They walked in and the shop was filled with people. Kids and parents were sitting at tables enjoying ice cream.

They walked up to the ice cream bar and Alvin looked at the various flavors behind the glass panes. Each flavor was labeled with a sign. There were ten flavors in total. An employee looked at both Alvin and Max and said,

“Take your time and decide what you want. You can have any mix of flavors you want or you can have a single flavor.”

Alvin looked down the line and read each of the signs. The first flavor was chocolate chip cookie dough. The second was strawberry. The third was chocolate. The fourth was vanilla. The fifth was Rocky Road chocolate. The sixth was mint. The seventh was lemon. The eighth flavor was cappuccino. The ninth flavor was cookies and cream. The final flavor was peanut butter chunk. Alvin made his choice and said

“I want a big bowl of chocolate chip cookie dough, cappuccino, cookies and cream and peanut butter chunk.”

Max then said

“I want two scoops of strawberry and two scoops of vanilla. Also, can we get six one liter water bottles?”

“That will be \$15.50 sir.” The employee said.

The employee scooped both bowls and got the water bottles. Max took out his wallet and paid the employee. Max gave Alvin his bowl and the two sat down at a table near the ice cream bar. Alvin dived into his ice cream bowl and his father said

“Slow down son, enjoy the ice cream. Don't eat so fast.”

Alvin was too distracted by the deliciousness of the ice cream. It was so sweet and creamy it delighted him.

“Ah! Brain freeze!” Alvin said, eating his ice cream too fast.

“See, I told you son. You gotta eat slowly. Here have some water. It's warmer than the ice cream it'll get rid of your brain freeze quickly.”

Alvin drank the water but it didn't help. His throat was parched from exercising so much that he drank half of the water bottle in one go. Alvin suddenly logged off of Essence. He swiveled his seat around and there was his family staring at him.

“Caught you.” Lonna said.

Alvin stared at her and said

“Let me explain, I wasn't doing anything malicious or nefarious. I was reexperiencing what it felt like to be a child. You can look at my Essence history, I haven't wiped it.”

Lonna crossed her arms and said

“I can't believe you Alvin. You said you would stop playing that damn game. How long have you been in Essence, behind my back?”

Alvin lied to his wife.

“I was just curious to see what it felt like again. I wanted to be five years old and with my father. I miss the old days back in New Jersey. I haven't felt such natural joy in my life since I was so little. You have to believe me Lonna, Essence is helping me.”

Alvin started sobbing uncontrollably. He was feeling a mixture of guilt and genuine sadness. He was no longer a child and he was living a fantasy of the life he wanted. Essence was the perfect means of escape from the melancholy of life. Alvin still didn't wirehead and his secret trips into Essence became his relief. It was like he was exhilarated from breaking the law, Lonna's law.

John, Isabella and Alfonso left the room to let Lonna speak to Alvin

“You shouldn't give into the temptation of Essence, Alvin. We've been through this discussion so many times I've lost count. Why can't you control yourself?”

Alvin decided to fight back and said

“Why can't you understand that I'm a grown man? Why do you have to keep controlling me? You're acting like what I'm doing is morally reprehensible but it's not Lonna! Essence is a normal part of life now. Let me do what I want!”

Lonna sensed Alvin's change in demeanor and said.

“Stop yelling! Today was supposed to be a good day. John, Isabella, Alfonso and I were having fun in New Mantia. We saw Alfonso's latest movie he started in, you should have came. Why can't you be dedicated to your family Alvin? Alfonso loves you and so does everyone else. They take time to listen to you but you don't reciprocate.”

“That's not true Lonna. I love my family. Just because I wanted to stay home after working doesn't mean I don't care. I do care. I was just tired from work and looking for some relief. The people at the Political Bureau are the only damn people who still work hard on this planet to maintain everything. I don't care what you say anymore. I'm going into Essence when I want to whenever I feel like it,” said Alvin

“I can't stop you from doing what you want Alvin. I can only try and guide you. You are a grown man. Let's stop arguing. Come here and give me a kiss,” said Lonna.

Alvin got out of his seat and kissed his wife.

“I love you,” he said.

August 12th, 150,000,000,000.

The Sun was constantly replaced with new stars every five billion years or so. All of the problems that would have come from the expansion of the original sun into a red giant were solved. Mercury, Venus and Earth were saved from being swallowed whole. The Moon did not fall into Earth's Roche limit and disintegrate⁴⁵. At year 8,000,000, the original transported sun had turned into a white dwarf.⁴⁶

Earth commemorated the death knell of the original sun which fostered life on Earth. Across the planet, a video livestream of the Sun being transported to the northwestern quadrant of

⁴⁵ Powell, David (January 22, 2007), "Earth's Moon Destined to Disintegrate", *Space.com*, Tech Media Network, retrieved 2010-06-01.

⁴⁶ Schroder, K. P.; Connon Smith, Robert (2008). "Distant Future of the Sun and Earth Revisited". *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. **386** (1): 155–163. [arXiv:0801.4031](https://arxiv.org/abs/0801.4031). Bibcode:2008MNRAS.386..155S. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2966.2008.13022.x.

Milkdromeda was broadcasted via the quantum relay network. Its death and fall into obscurity left an indelible impression on mankind. This sun gave humanity everything it needed to succeed and thrive. Even though the Annunaki created mankind, we would not have existed without the sustenance of the sun.

A possible scenario for the end of the universe had been proven false by the year 22,000,000,000. The equation of state, $w=P/p$, determines the ratio of pressure relative to the energy density of the universe. The value for a big rip scenario would have to be at $w = -1.5$ ⁴⁷. Its true value, with gravitational tractor fleets slowly moving the universes closer to one another was $w = .0001$. This meant that the universe was slowly, over time, coming in closer for a big crunch scenario. When all of the universe's dark matter and energy was harvested at the end of the universe, Alvin would order the fleets to use the last of the energy supplies to start the Big Crunch. This Big Crunch scenario would condense the universe into a massive singularity and steal dark energy from another collapsing universe once enough regular matter and dark energy was condensed.

At year 50,000,000,000, without the action of gravitational tractor ships, the Earth and moon would have become tide locked⁴⁸. Only one side of the moon would have faced the Earth, but this never happened. Across the galaxy, resource acquisition from the galaxies of the local group had depleted most galaxies of usable materials from the dematerialization of planets. Now humanity had begun to transport planets from outside the local group. They used the massive labyrinthian network of humongous wormholes established between the galaxies a long time ago.

50 billion years later it was predicted that due to the dark energy expansion of the universe, the galaxies beyond the local group would move past the cosmic light horizon⁴⁹. This didn't happen because of the gravitational tractor fleets pushing the galaxies beyond the local group closer together. This operation required massive amounts of dark energy and dark matter. By this point, .0000000001% of the dark energy and matter in the universe had been used in these operations. Several galaxies within the different galactic groups had already been merged. The goal was to merge each group of galaxies and then expend most of the dark energy in the universe coalescing the groups in a massive final push.

At year 150,000,000,000, all traces of the cosmic microwave background were gone⁵⁰. The CMB had cooled to 0.3 Kelvin and was undetectable⁵¹. Evidence of the universe's big bang was now

⁴⁷ Vikhlinin, A.; Kravtsov, A.V.; Burenin, R.A.; et al. (2009). "Chandra Cluster Cosmology Project III: Cosmological Parameter Constraints". *The Astrophysical Journal*. *Astrophysical Journal*. **692** (2): 1060–

1074. *arXiv:0812.2720*. *Bibcode:2009ApJ...692.1060V*. *doi:10.1088/0004-637X/692/2/1060*.

⁴⁸ Murray, C.D. & Dermott, S.F. (1999). *Solar System Dynamics*. *Cambridge University Press*. p. 184. ISBN 978-0-521-57295-8.

⁴⁹ Loeb, Abraham (2011). "Cosmology with Hypervelocity Stars". *Harvard University*. **2011**: 023. *arXiv:1102.0007*. *Bibcode:2011JCAP...04..023L*. *doi:10.1088/1475-7516/2011/04/023*.

⁵⁰ Chown, Marcus (1996). *Afterglow of Creation*. University Science Books. p. 210.

⁵¹ Chown, Marcus (1996). *Afterglow of Creation*. University Science Books. p. 210.

gone beyond the archives of humanity. This left a profound effect on Alvin and Lonna. Today, they planned to deviate from the normal routine of work, sex and staying at home. They wanted to go out into the countryside of Africa away from the light pollution of the cities to see the universe at large. Alvin fabricated a flying car for the first time in his life for the event.

Alvin fabricated three laser pulse rifles for him, his wife and Invictus for when they entered the Serengeti. They created a high power telescope for the event, crystal vortex armor to protect against animals and additional cell phones just in case anything went wrong. Alvin also brought some lawn chairs and a cooler full of water bottles and sandwiches. They flew one hundred miles south of New Mantia to Serengeti Global Park. They landed in a massive grassy plain which spread out for as far as the eyes could see. It was around 6:20 and the sun would be setting soon.

It amazed Alvin how vast parts of the Earth were still uninhabited. Humans tended to congregate close to one another, in cities, suburbs and rural areas of the planet. He thought of how the population stabilized and people rarely had more than one or two kids. There was enough space on the planet for so many more people. He guessed that since survival was now trivial, the need to pass one's genes down the line was less of a priority.

He, Lonna and Invictus set up a camp in the middle of the plain before the sun set. Invictus stood on watch as he scanned the Serengeti for any wildlife that might endanger the group. He had sensors in his head that could detect motion for two miles in any direction. He patrolled the camp until Alvin was finally set up. Alvin looked into the night sky with Lonna and said

“I'm surprised the atmospheric filters and satellites in the sky haven't completely blocked our view. They're made of sturdy and transparent electronics, those things..”

Alvin pointed into the sky towards the massive supercomputer that was in orbit with the moon.

“That supercomputer is hardly visible in the city light at night. It's almost as massive as the moon but made of an optical and light transparent substrate. The light the moon reflects at night lets you see its shape more easily.”

Lonna looked at the supercomputer and said

“What about the rest of the night sky Alvin? Let's look into the telescope.”

Lonna looked into the telescope and was aided by an AGI in the scope which identified what they were looking at. She set her eyes on the massive rift that was now the Milkdrameda galaxy. The telescope aided by futuristic optics could peer deep into the abyss of the universe. The further she zoomed in, she could see with a resolution equivalent to the hubble deep field satellite.

Galaxies came into view the further she looked. The actions of humanity billions of years ago had reached the telescope and she saw the early stages of the coalescing of galaxies. Galaxies outside of the local group were much closer to one another than they would be naturally.

With one eye closed, she said to Alvin

“It's amazing to see what humanity has done in the universe. Look Alvin, look at those galaxies deep off in the distance. That's what happened 10, 20, 30 billion years ago.”

Alvin looked into the telescope and scanned the sky. He looked at Mars and saw how it transformed over the billions of years. He then said to Lonna,

“It really is amazing Lonna. Check out Mars. It looks so different from when we were kids, so long ago. It used to be red and barren. Now it's full of life, green and with blue oceans. Looks a lot like Earth.”

Lonna peeked back into the telescope and said

“Yup. It really transformed, Alvin. All thanks to you and the work you did so long ago. The miracles we see today wouldn't have happened without your guiding hand.”

Lonna looked at Alvin and said

“Enough of the telescope honey. Let's lie down in the grass and enjoy the stars with our own eyes.”

Alvin went back into the flying car to get a pair of large blankets to put down on the ground. He put the blankets on the ground and lied down with his wife. He put his hands behind his head and stretched out on the blanket. He then said,

“Life's good. So good. Look at how much stuff there is in the universe. It blows my mind how this all came to be. There has to be a God out there and down here with us. I'm doubting my tendencies and what John told us.”

Lonna looked at her husband and said,

“Really Alvin? You were always a staunch atheist. You said that religion was stupid and that you could never believe in that sort of nonsense.”

Alvin looked at Lonna and said

“I'm conflicted about it. I just really don't know anymore. I feel that this universe and the metauniverse couldn't have just come out of nothing. Maybe this place is what God made out of frustration, loneliness and despair. An eternal existence just existing must get depressing. I know I shouldn't anthropomorphize God, but what else would God do for forever? Life to him is just a big science experiment and we are the reagents that make it work.”

Lonna reached for Alvin's hand. He accepted her grasp and she said,

“You've changed Alvin. You really have. What's the other half of the story? Why are you so conflicted?”

Alvin stroked his thumb on the top of Lonna's hand and said

“Before the singularity, there was so much suffering. We lived to die. There were problems without solutions and diseases without cures. We had no proof of God and we still don't. Billions had faith in something that mankind had made up. The God that might exist if one does exist, is nothing like we believe it is. To me God is more like a chaotic mass of tortured souls, crying out into eternity. When the universe was born, God was set free. I don't know Lonna. I'm so unsure.”

“Do you think we'll come back to life as the same people when the universe restarts Alvin?”
Asked Lonna.

“Maybe this universe is destined to repeat forever. All of this is probably just an illusion. Maybe we don't really have free will at all. Determinism is true, so I guess that proves that fact. We're just living a big chain of events that followed after the beginning of the universe. It's so depressing Lonna,” Alvin said.

“I don't feel that way Alvin. I feel free. I feel liberated from that grand destiny,” Lonna said.

In the sky, a fleet of Space Corps ships was arriving to set down in Africa. The fleet was huge and encompassed the entire sky.

“Let's wirehead Alvin. I want to feel better. The universe isn't doing it for me,” said Lonna.

Alvin went to the flying car and took out two pills from the glovebox. He got two bottles of water as well from the cooler. He gave one pill of wireheading drugs to Lonna and took one himself. He activated his nanobots in his head from his smartphone and Lonna activated hers. He lied back down with her and felt the effects. He smiled as the wireheading kicked in. He felt blissful and at peace. After the Space Corps fleet had landed and no longer obscured his sight, he took in the universe once more.

He was there with humanity. At every planet in the galaxy, at home and in his heart. He felt overwhelming waves of love and pleasure. His wife turned to him and said

“I love you. Kiss me Alvin.”

He kissed her and felt the soft touch of her lips. He felt her smooth skin and got goosebumps all over his body. Her body was a gateway to a pleasure much higher than wireheading. He felt connected to her now more than ever. Invictus ran up to the two, yelling

“Get up! I've detected a pack of lions a mile away! They're going to close in the distance quickly! We need to get out of here!”

Alvin and Lonna were immediately alarmed. They rose to their feet and ran towards the flying car. Invictus followed behind and jumped in the back seats. He aimed his rifle at the lions.

“You probably can't see them, but they're running here fast. They saw us on the plain,” said Invictus.

Alvin piloted the car back to his home in New Mantia and left everything he brought for the trip behind. Perhaps someone would discover the telescope and take it home for themselves. By the time they were a few miles north, the lions had reached the camp.

“Good thing you brought me along. Those lions were probably going to eat you two! They might have taken a bite out of me too.* Invictus said.

When the three arrived home, Alvin was still wireheading. He turned off his nanobots and ended the wireheading. He dismissed Invictus for the night and let him do what he felt like. He had sex with his wife and snuggled her to sleep.

The next day, Alvin was awoken at 5 am by his phone ringing. The phone notification said it was his father, Max. He answered the phone and on the line was Max's personal AI assistant, Impala.

“Alvin, your parents are dead.”

Alvin half awoke, felt his heart racing. He then said,

“Dead? What? What are you talking about?”

“Your father shot himself and your mother killed herself as well. They left a note for you. I've called the police and told them that you would be coming soon,” said Impala.

“Yes, Impala. I should be there in half an hour,” said Alvin.

Lonna had awoken and heard what was going on. She then said,

“Your parents are dead Alvin? I don't want to go see the bodies. I'll stay here and you can go. I think it would be better if you just went by yourself.”

Alvin began to hastily put clothes on and was on the verge of breaking down in tears.

“I'll be back soon. I'll call you if I need anything,” Alvin said.

Alvin got into his flying car and flew to his parents house on the outskirts of New Mantia. By the time he had arrived twenty minutes later, police were already at the scene. Outside of the house, there were a few bystanders in the early morning hours. Around the perimeter of the house was yellow police tape that said “Crime Scene Do Not Cross.” A police officer was guarding the door when Alvin came up to him and said,

“Let me in. I’m their son. I need to know what happened to my parents.”

“Alvin Reed? We need you to come in and identify the bodies.” The officer said.

Alvin was let into the house and a team of police officers was in the living room, taking photographs. The officer guarding the door went back outside. A detective walked up to Alvin and said

“They’re in the bedroom Alvin, come with me.”

Alvin followed the detective down the hallway from the living room into the master bedroom. He opened the door and a team of coroners was already in the room inspecting the body and making reports. Max and his wife Carrie were lying against the headboard of their beds. Their heads had been blown apart by a pistol that was laying in the middle of their bodies. Their blood had covered the entire back wall which the bed was against.

Alvin could recognize that this was his father and mother. He told the detective

“Yes, that’s them.”

Alvin then broke down crying at the sight of his dead parents. He couldn’t believe that they would kill themselves and he let out a cry in agony.

“Why! Why God why!”

If anything would disinstill the belief in God it was this moment. He still cried out to God in the most desperate of times, for him doing this was an old coping mechanism for traumatic events. The coroners and the detective looked at him, frowning. The detective said to Alvin,

“We’ve ruled out the possibility that it was their android Impala who may have murdered them. We’re interrogating him as we speak and it seems like he wasn’t complicit. The forensics have led us to believe that this was a double suicide. Your father left a note on the living room table. I have it with me. Do you want to read it?”

“Yes. Let me see it.” Alvin said.

The detective handed the note to Alvin and he began to read it. The note said,

“Hello Alvin. I know that this is going to be traumatic when you find out, but we are now dead. We love you son, we love you so much. But, your mother and I cannot live any longer. For billions of years we’ve lived lives we didn’t want to live. We are both extremely unhappy with the way things have turned out, even though things have improved so much. We are both depressed beyond belief and felt we have lived good lives. Before we died, we talked about your first steps, the first time you spoke, the first day of school. We miss the old days Alvin, when you were a beautiful little boy.

We lived long enough to have a grandchild and a great grandchild. We never expected life to turn out like this Alvin. We went through so much. The singularity, the revolution, the war with the Annunaki, the rise of humanity. We are tired of being the people who we are. We want to be reborn again and experience the joy of discovering life again. Remember that we will always be with you son. In your heart you will have us and in your mind we will live on.

With love,

Mom and Dad.”

Alvin gave the letter to the detective and stormed out of the room. He sat down at the dining table in the living room and started to cry. He began hyperventilating as he was crying. He buried his head in his arms and was beset with grief. He couldn't understand why his parents would do this. Everything was perfect, he thought. What more could they ask for? What was there to rediscover about life?

Then Alvin realized that everything was not perfect. This universe was not heaven. People still suffered even with material excess and spiritual abundance. Nothing could ever replace the joy of being a child discovering the world with fresh eyes. He sat there sobbing for minutes on end. His parents were gone and there was nothing he could do. By now, they would have reincarnated as new people on this planet. Their bodies lay in a pool of blood, encumbered with excrement. He thought they would ride it out until the singularity at the end of time.

Their lives came to an end too soon, he thought. He thought of Lonna, Isabella, John and Alfonso. He would stay here for them. This was his only family he had left. Lonna's parents met a similar fate before the singularity happened. He thought of the traffic accident they died in and how now, he and his wife had no family left besides John, Isabella and Alfonso.

Alvin stopped crying after ten minutes and lifted his head up from his arms. Impala was standing nearby, finished with his interrogation.

“I'm sorry Alvin. I'm sorry I couldn't have stopped them sooner. By the time I found the note it was too late. I heard the shots go off and I ran into the bedroom. They were dead. Your parents were good people Alvin, good people. It is a shame they had to die that way. I will still be here to serve you in any capacity that you need me Alvin. I'll be here for you, always.”

Alvin looked up at Impala and said

“Thank you Impala. I welcome you into my household. You will be needed in the coming weeks. Invictus is always busy at the Political Bureau. We need help at the house.”

Impala gave Alvin a paper towel to wipe his tears. Alvin wiped the tears and his eyes were crimson red. He blew his nose and gave the paper towel to Impala. He was still hyperventilating, struggling to breathe. He then said

“I need some water Impala, get me some water please. Throw out that paper towel too.”

“Sure thing Alvin.” Impala said.

Impala went to the refrigerator to get a water bottle and gave it to Alvin. He threw out the paper towel and then gave the water bottle to Alvin. Alvin drank half of the water bottle, his parched throat became quenched. The detective came out of the bedroom back to the living room to speak to Alvin. He said

“We just finished a toxicology report on your parents Alvin. They took ten cyanide pills before they shot themselves. We don't need you here anymore. You're free to go home and take Impala with you. The body will be held at the morgue until you're ready to schedule the funeral. I'm sorry this had to happen Alvin.”

“I understand. We will be arranging the funeral within the next week. I'm leaving to go back home. Call me when the body is at the morgue.” Alvin said.

Alvin left the house with Impala and outside, news reporters were taking pictures of the house. They rushed Alvin and shouted out questions.

“Alvin! What happened to your parents?”

“Are your parents dead?”

“Alvin speak to us!”

Alvin brushed the reporters aside and went to his flying car. The reporters backed away from the car and gave him room to take off. He flew back to his home in the suburbs of New Mantia and was greeted by his wife. She looked at Impala and knew that Alvin's parents were really dead.

“You took their android?” Lonna asked.

“Yes, I had to. He has nowhere to go. No family to stay with,” said Alvin.

“How bad was it Alvin?” Lonna asked.

The tears came back in his eyes and his voice became heavy. He started sobbing again and hyperventilating. His wife held him and he looked over her shoulder. He then said

“It was bad honey, so bad. There was so much blood. They took ten cyanide pills each and shot themselves in the head. They both shit themselves. It was horrible.”

Lonna started crying as well.

“I'm sorry I didn't come Alvin. I'm sorry. Did they leave a note?”

Alvin let go of his wife and walked into the living room to sit down on the couch. Lonna followed him into the room.

“Yes, they left a note. It basically said they were unhappy with the way things turned out. They missed the old me, when I was a little kid. They said they loved me. It was all saddening and disheartening. I just don't understand Lonna. Why did they do this? Is life really so unbearable now? I thought everything was perfect? I thought this was Utopia? Isn't this place paradise?” Alvin said.

Alvin lied down on the couch and rested his head in Lonna's lap. Lonna stroked Alvin's hair and he stared off into the ceiling. Impala came into the room and asked

“What do you need me to do, Alvin?”

Alvin tilted his head to the left at the entrance of the living room and said

“I have a spare set of keys on the key holder in the kitchen next to the calendar near the refrigerator. I need you to get some extra material for the nanobots to assemble food. Also, take the house phone and call John, Isabella and Alfonso. Inform them that Max and Carrie are dead. If you need a backpack to carry the keys and anything else you might need I have a spare one in the garage. It's next to the bins of nanobots and materials.”

Impala nodded his head and said

“Understood Alvin. I will go to the commons for materials and come back shortly. First, I will call your son and his family to inform them of your father's untimely passing. I'm sorry this had to happen Alvin.”

“It's okay Impala, it's not your fault.” Alvin said.

Impala left the room and started the tasks Alvin asked him to do. Lonna looked at Alvin and said

“We're still human Alvin. Even with wireheading, access to any drugs we want, endless sex, no work and a bunch of other pleasures, we still get bored over time. We still get anxiety, fear of death, we still are unsure about our emotions on a day to day basis. We are very temperamental. We weren't meant to live this long Alvin. Evolution had in mind something like twenty years of survival.

Humans survived until their nineties in the twenty first century. Now we live forever. What we are doing is unnatural, it wasn't meant to be. Alvin, get some rest honey. Today is a day of sadness. You should sleep until you feel better.”

“I don't think I'm going to feel better for a long time.” Alvin said.

A week later, funeral arrangements were made and Alvin's family arrived at the funeral home. Although this was a private affair, the communist news media harassed Alvin during the entire

process. News crews and reporters were outside the funeral home taking pictures and asking questions. The world found out that his parents had committed suicide and were in lamentation with him. At the funeral home, both caskets of his mother and father were set up across from one another.

The family viewed the bodies of Alvin's parents. Nanobots and reconstructive surgery managed to fix the entry and exit wounds from the gunshots. The bodies were cleaned of excrement and smelled neutral. Alvin looked down on his father's face and prayed to God for the first time in the long time. Hopefully he's somewhere better, starting a new life, he thought. He did the same with his mother. The viewing lasted about fifteen minutes since there was only Alvin and his family to view the bodies.

The bodies were loaded into flying hearses and transported to a graveyard in the western half of New Mantia. Alvin and his family arrived in a rural area of New Mantia but information had leaked of where the bodies would be buried. When he and his family arrived, he was harassed again by the news media. A group of men from the funeral home came to bring his mother's casket to the funeral plots. Alvin, John, Invictus, Impala and Alfonso lifted Max's casket to the nearby grave.

His parents were to be buried next to each other and a priest was there to give a funeral sermon. Alvin had a change of heart and decided to let a priest speak at the funeral. After the caskets were lowered into the graves, the priest spoke.

"We are here today to mourn the loss of Max and Carrie Reed. We ask the blessed Lord above to be kind and merciful towards them as they make their way to heaven. The Catholic Church says that suicide is a sin which places one in purgatory or hell but I beg to differ. The parents of Alvin Reed were good people. They gave birth to Alvin, a man who has done much good for mankind. We ask the Lord for forgiveness for the mistakes of his parents and for the Lord to guide them in heaven.

We will remember the good deeds of Max and Carrie Reed for eternity. When the Lord comes to save humanity, they will be resurrected when the rapture commences. I shall say a final prayer to end the funeral.

In your hands, O Lord,
we humbly entrust our brothers and sisters.
In this life you embraced them with your tender love;
deliver them now from every evil
and bid them eternal rest.

The old order has passed away:
welcome them into paradise,
where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain,
but fullness of peace and joy

with your Son and the Holy Spirit
forever and ever.⁵²

Amen.”

The priest made the sign of the cross and grave diggers began to pile up dirt on the caskets. The family stood there in silence. No one made the sign of the cross except the priest. Alvin had never been to a funeral before and this was the custom he was most familiar with. He put aside his conflicting beliefs in God and accepted the priest’s words. He felt comfort in knowing that this ritual might mean something if God was watching. No one had been to the other side and lived to tell about it. Maybe these prayers secured his parents entrance into heaven, if it existed at all.

The funeral ended after those brief prayers and Alvin's family went back home. At home, Alvin and Lonna prepared a dinner for the family. They talked about Alvin's parents and the good things they did in their lives. Alvin talked long about his parents careers before the singularity. He talked about how they were successful engineers for a fortune 500 company and how their ambitions rubbed off on him.

The family left a few hours later and Alvin retreated to his bedroom to write a poem in memory of his parents. The poem’s title was

“Death”

He spent a half hour writing and came up with the body of the poem.

“You will be remembered forever,
This death is not final, never.
I will do your will,
I carry this cross on the hill.

My love for you is infinite,
Until the singularity, the last minute.
I love you Mom and Dad,
I will remember, I will not be sad.”

Despite his words, Alvin still felt overwhelming grief. He opened his desk drawer and put the poem inside. He put his head into his arms and sobbed for one last time.

⁵² "Prayers for Death and Dying." *Prayers for Death and Dying*. <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/bereavement-and-funerals/prayers-for-death-and-dying.cfm>.

Chapter 10: Singularity

January 1st, 120,000,000,000,000

During year 450,000,000,000, the galaxies of the local group coalesced into one large galaxy⁵³. The other groups of galaxies in the universe had done the same around this time through their gravitational attraction and the work of the gravitational tractor fleets. The dark energy and dark matter consumed was increasing ever slowly. The amount left concerned physicists on Earth as to whether it would be possible to create a singularity at the end of time with the remaining supplies of dark matter and energy. It had been calculated that there would be just enough for humanity's needs.

At year 800,000,000,000, the light emissions from the local group galaxy were beginning to decline. Stars were running out of fuel and star formation was slowing down⁵⁴. During year 4,000,000,000,000, Proxima Centauri, the closest star to Earth, became a white dwarf⁵⁵. 8 trillion years later, the star VB10 became a white dwarf as well⁵⁶. 18 trillion years afterwards, it was estimated that each star in the universe would gravitationally interact with another star⁵⁷. This was avoided when solar systems were towed into stable orbits around the galactic center by gravitational fleets.

By year 100 trillion, natural star formation had ceased in galaxies⁵⁸. The final stars to be formed in the universe that were large enough to sustain inhabited planets were transferred to the local group galaxy. The huge supplies of dark matter and dark energy left in the universe were now being converted into hydrogen to form stars. Massive amounts of matter and energy were collected outside of the galaxies. In these massive collections of dark matter and energy, the temperatures reached 10^{32} Kelvin and as the energy cooled, it formed hydrogen.

Gravitational tractor ships accelerated the process of star formation by pushing together large clumps of hydrogen into spherical masses. The rest of the universe's stars were abandoned and

⁵³ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372. [arXiv:astro-ph/9701131](https://arxiv.org/abs/astro-ph/9701131). Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A. doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337.

⁵⁴ Adams, F. C.; Graves, G. J. M.; Laughlin, G. (December 2004). García-Segura, G.; Tenorio-Tagle, G.; Franco, J.; Yorke, H. W., eds. "Gravitational Collapse: From Massive Stars to Planets. / First Astrophysics meeting of the Observatorio Astronómico Nacional. / A meeting to celebrate Peter Bodenheimer for his outstanding contributions to Astrophysics: Red Dwarfs and the End of the Main Sequence". *Revista Mexicana de Astronomía y Astrofísica (Serie de Conferencias)*. **22**: 46–49. Bibcode:2004RMxAC..22...46A. See Fig. 3.

⁵⁵ Fred C. Adams; Gregory Laughlin; Genevieve J. M. Graves (2004). "RED Dwarfs and the End of The Main Sequence" (PDF). *RevMexAA (Serie de Conferencias)*. **22**: 46–49.

⁵⁶ Adams, F. C.; P. Bodenheimer; G. Laughlin (2005). "M dwarfs: planet formation and long term evolution". *Astronomische Nachrichten*. **326** (10): 913–919. Bibcode:2005AN....326..913A. doi:10.1002/asna.200510440.

⁵⁷ Tayler, Roger John (1993). *Galaxies, Structure and Evolution* (2 ed.). Cambridge University Press. p. 92. ISBN 978-0-521-36710-3.

⁵⁸ Adams, Fred; Laughlin, Greg (1999). *The Five Ages of the Universe*. New York: The Free Press. ISBN 978-0-684-85422-9.

only planets were used for material resources. Humanity was nowhere close to dematerializing the entirety of the universe's planets for resources. It was estimated that the natural resources left in the trillions of galaxies in the other groups would sustain humanity forever. 20 trillion years later, all stars that had formed before this point had run out of fuel⁵⁹. Every 4 or 5 billion years after this point, medium G sequence size stars would be created from dark matter and energy.

Alvin today was invited to the screening of Alfonso's new movie. The movie was the story of Alvin's life. It was titled *Until the End of Time*. Alvin and his family flew to New Mantia City for the exclusive screening. Alfonso played Alvin in the movie and Alvin was excited. He wasn't told much about the movie besides that it would be about him. At 8:30pm, they exited a flying taxi and appeared on the red carpet of the New Mantia City Cinema.

Paparazzi and news media snapped shots of Alvin and Lonna as they walked down the red carpet. He smiled for the camera and gave several thumbs up towards the photographers. On the red carpet were John, Alfonso and Isabella ahead of him. They arrived ten minutes earlier for the screening and were being interviewed by the paparazzi. Alvin took questions from a reporter while being flashed by camera lights.

"So Alvin, how do you feel about this movie? You're the star! Well, your grandson is!"

Alvin smiled revealing his pearly white teeth to the cameras and said

"I haven't been told much since pre production. All I've been told is that it's about me and my journey. I'm excited to see a film about my life, especially since Alfonso is playing me. I think it's going to be a hit."

Reporters swarmed Alvin behind the red carpet stanchion ropes. They shouted out questions like

"Alvin, Alvin! Do you think this movie is going to paint you in a bad light?"

"Alvin! Do you think the aliens are going to see the movie?"

One heckler yelled out

"He dies at the end!"

Alvin heard the heckler and turned to him. He chuckled as he posed for pictures. He walked down the red carpet with his wife waving to the paparazzi as he was called into the theatre. He followed his family, the actors and other important figures involved in the film into the theatre. New Mantia Cinema was a grand theatre.

⁵⁹ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372.[arXiv:astro-ph/9701131](#) [Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A](#).[doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337](#).

The theatre was styled in art deco architecture and a mix of baroque painting. The theatre was adorned with gold leaf on various fixtures and ornaments throughout. Marble columns lead to a central circular lobby where popcorn machines, refreshments and treats were served. In right hand corner of the lobby was the ticket sales room for current showings at the theatre. To the left were arcade machines and bathrooms. Down the main hallway of the theatre, opposing theaters hosted different screenings of *Until the End of Time*.

Before he went into the viewing theater, Alvin ordered popcorn and drinks. Lonna ate some of the popcorn before they got into the viewing theater. In the first theater to the right was where the movie was being shown for VIP guests. Alvin always liked to sit in the back of the theater to get a full view of the screen. The family sat in the same row and the theater filled up quickly. A lot of the VIPs shared the same sentiment and no one filled the first few rows.

The movie began ten minutes later. The first thing Alvin noticed was the starting point of the movie. The movie started at his time at Singularitarian. He had no problem with that and felt that the earlier parts of his life were less exciting. As the movie went along, he became enraptured by the performances of the actors. The key points of his journey were covered in detail in the span of two and a half hours. The movie ended with a scene of Alvin on a walkway extending from a ship walking out towards the singularity at the end of time. The camera was positioned behind Alvin's head and as he entered the singularity, the movie cut to black.

The VIP crowd roared in applause and some of the people in the room were even heard crying. Alvin clapped until his hands turned red. He was impressed. The two and a half hour movie was a tour de force. Some parts of his journey were not covered due to time constraints but all the major events were covered masterfully. Alvin thought this experience was overly meta. Here he was, watching a movie about his life with the main actor his grandson. During the credit roll, his wife turned to him and said

“That was good huh? Alfonso was perfect. That's the story of your life honey. I'm sure everyone is going to love it.”

Alvin then said

“I think so too dear, I think so too. It was beyond good, it was excellent. I may sound biased, but that movie was enthralling. The action, the cinematography, the music, everything was perfect. One of the best movies I've ever seen, hands down.”

Alvin thought about if everything would really play out like that. It seemed realistic how the movie ended with his stepping into the singularity and cutting to black. In this moment he entered a deep existential crisis. Would the singularity work? Would the universe restart or would his plan fail? He tried to stop thinking of the idea but as he left the movie theater, it started to dampen his mood. Outside on the red carpet, the paparazzi had stuck around. Camera flashes went off and more questions were shouted at Alvin and the VIPs.

“How was the movie?! Was it good?!”

“Alvin! Alvin! Did you die at the end?!”

“Alfonso! Do you think you'll win an Oscar for your performance?!”

Alvin ignored the questions and waved away the paparazzi until he got to the end of the red carpet. He answered one reporter who asked,

“Alvin how was the movie? Was it good?”

Alvin said,

“Best movie I've ever seen in my life. I know that sounds biased, but damn, it was good. No more questions guys, I'm going out for dinner with the family.”

Alvin met up with his family and they got into a flying cab to have dinner in the city. They went to the Good Eats restaurant in Downtown New Mantia city. Here, there were no paparazzi but Alvin knew they would soon find out where they were and bother his family. A server took them to two booths in the restaurant and seated them. Alvin ordered a deep dish pizza for him and his wife. John ordered a cheeseburger and fries. Isabella wanted a steak and mashed potatoes. Alfonso ordered General Tso's chicken and pork fried rice.

Everyone got several rounds of drinks to celebrate the movie and the new year. When the drinks came, Alvin said

“Cheers! This is for a happy new year and a successful movie premiere! Enjoy your meals everyone.”

The family gorged on several courses and desserts. They piled on drinks and everyone became drunk quickly. Everyone surged their bodies with nanobots to offset the massive caloric intake. The nanobots would expedite the digestion process and render the food incapable of being extracted of calories. After an hour and a half, everyone left to go home and they were feeling bloated from all of the food and drinks.

The next day, Alvin went to work at the Political Bureau in New Mantia city. An assistant had called him into the assembly hall. There the galactic administrators were waiting via hologram. Joseph was standing at the podium. He noticed Alvin walk into the assembly hall and spoke into the microphone at the podium.

“Greetings Alvin. We have special news for you. You might want to sit down, it's going to be a lot for you to take in.”

Alvin didn't like surprises. He thought that something terrible had happened and that he was going to get reprimanded for it. He took a seat in the desk next to the podium. Joseph then said,

“We have been discussing something in secret Alvin. The galactic administrators and I have talked about this for a long time. We mulled over it and finally came to a decision in a secret assembly meeting last night. Alvin, we want to declare you emperor of humanity.”

Alvin was shocked by two things. The first was the fact that he had not been privy to important administrative matters. The second thing was that the administrators had decided to form an empire, with him as emperor. Empire was antithetical to the entire point of the revolution and the exact reason why he killed Heinrich. In this moment, he feared that someone would kill him in the same way he killed Heinrich.

“There has been unanimous agreement that you are deserving of the title Alvin. The bureaus of the galaxy have not dissented against the idea and we have been in discussion for a very long time on this matter. We decided that when it comes time for the singularity at the end of universe, we need one powerful central figure to have authority over the galaxy. There will probably be chaos without an emperor,” Joseph said.

Joseph opened the cabinets of the podium and pulled out a crown.

“We have made this crown for you to wear, ceremonially. It is the symbol of your new found power. I hand this crown to you and propose to you the position of emperor of humanity, Alvin Reed.”

Joseph gave the crown to Alvin but he refused it. He gave the crown back to Joseph and said

“I cannot accept this Joseph. I want humanity to be free.”

Joseph gave the crown back to him and asked,

“Are you sure Alvin?”

Alvin thought of the prospect of civil war at the end of time and the chaos that would result from a lack of authority. Quadrillions of humans would surely not choose to die by being swallowed by a singularity. They would want to use the last reserves of dark matter and energy to survive for as long as possible. They wouldn't understand the gravity of the situation. Would another few trillion years matter compared to ever having the chance to live again in a fresh universe? Alvin reached out for the crown and Joseph gave it to him. He put it on his head and Joseph walked back to the podium. Joseph said,

“All hail the immortal emperor of mankind!”

The administrators and secretaries saluted Alvin. Alvin walked up to the podium and said to Joseph,

“I would like to say some words Joseph. Do you mind if I take the stand?”

Joseph smiled and said,

“No problem my friend. Speak to your heart’s content.”

Alvin propped himself against the podium and said,

“Humans of the galaxy, I am honored to be the new emperor of mankind. In my time, as I have done for countless eons, I will rule justly and peacefully. I shall use the power vested in me to reign over mankind with the help of the Political Bureaus. Do not be mistaken, humanity shall still be free and autonomous. With my new found power I will guide humanity to its righteous destiny in the singularity at the end of time.

Although it is deeply saddening that we all must perish, we will be going back to the source of creation. We will experience rebirth and regeneration in a new life after a second big bang creates a new universe.

I am proud to call humanity the race I was a part of. I hope to see many more prosperous years with the empire. Thank you.”

The administrators and secretaries gave Alvin a three minute standing ovation. News of Alvin’s coronation propagated across the galaxy immediately and celebrations were held in his honor. The administrators of the bureaus began to commission statues and monuments be erected in his image. Alvin was now the immortal emperor of mankind until the end of time.

August 15th, year 5.8×10^{68}

At year 1 quadrillion, it was estimated that close encounters with other star systems would detach all planets from their solar systems⁶⁰. This was prevented with constant monitoring by gravitational fleets keeping planets in orbit. Humanity was fighting a desperate struggle against entropy. While the universe was becoming more chaotic, humanity tried to maintain order in the universe.

99 quintillion years later, the same process which would have caused planets to be ejected from their orbits was predicted to have ejected the remaining stellar remnants and stars in the galaxy⁶¹. The gravitational tractor fleets were using more dark energy and matter to maintain the universe at large. With each passing day, the merged galactic groups were pushed closer together against the expansionary forces of dark energy. As the amount of dark energy in the universe decreased, the expansionary forces decreased proportionally. By year 100 quintillion, if humanity had not been constantly creating and forming new stars, Earth would have collided with the original

⁶⁰ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372.[arXiv:astro-ph/9701131](#). [Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A](#). [doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337](#).

⁶¹ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372.[arXiv:astro-ph/9701131](#). [Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A](#). [doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337](#).

black dwarf sun⁶². This only would have happened if it was not engulfed by the sun as it reached its red giant phase. None of these events ever happened and Earth sustained its existence.

By year 10^{30} , it was predicted that the only remaining bodies in the universe would be brown dwarfs, black holes, ejected planets and stellar remnants⁶³. This should have occurred ultimately with all stars falling into the supermassive black holes in the middle of each galactic group. Like in the years before, this had been prevented by the diligent gravitational manipulation of these systems.

When year 2×10^{36} came, the old theory of nucleon decay had been disproven. The nuclei of atoms would never decay due to the laws of physics⁶⁴ that had been discovered post singularity. The mass of the universe would remain and not convert into energy. The longest estimate of the old theory of nucleon decay was 3×10^{43} ⁶⁵ years after the 21st century. Since nucleons did not decay, this old theory became irrelevant.

At year 10^{65} it was predicted that quantum tunneling would turn all matter into smooth spheres⁶⁶. The atoms and molecules would rearrange into a liquid type state of matter. This never happened and disproved the notions of physics of the twentieth and twenty first century. It seemed that matter was in an indefinite state of stability and that physicists made the wrong predictions. Throughout the eons of time, concerns arose that not just the singularity at the end of time would require dark energy. The supermassive black holes at the center of every galaxy needed to be sustained to maintain the orbital mechanics of the galactic groups. Dark energy and dark matter were now being expended maintaining these supermassive black holes.

By year 5.8×10^{68} , this amount of time was when a black hole of 3 solar masses would decay due to Hawking radiation⁶⁷. The stationary black holes which kept planets and other bodies stable in the the galactic groups were of the largest concern. Planets which had not been

⁶² Dyson, Freeman J. (1979). "Time Without End: Physics and Biology in an Open Universe". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **51**(3): 447–460. Bibcode:1979RvMP...51..447D, doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.51.447.

⁶³ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372. arXiv:astro-ph/9701131. Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A, doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337.

⁶⁴ Tyson, Neil de Grasse; Tsun-Chu Liu, Charles; Iiron, Robert (2000). *One Universe: At Home in the Cosmos*. Joseph Henry Press. ISBN 978-0-309-06488-0.

⁶⁵ Adams, Fred C.; Laughlin, Gregory (April 1997). "A dying universe: the long-term fate and evolution of astrophysical objects". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **69** (2): 337–372. arXiv:astro-ph/9701131. Bibcode:1997RvMP...69..337A, doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.69.337.

⁶⁶ Dyson, Freeman J. (1979). "Time Without End: Physics and Biology in an Open Universe". *Reviews of Modern Physics*. **51**(3): 447–460. Bibcode:1979RvMP...51..447D, doi:10.1103/RevModPhys.51.447.

⁶⁷ Page, Don N. (1976). "Particle Emission Rates from a Black Hole: Massless Particles from an Uncharged, Nonrotating Hole". *Physical Review D*. **13** (2): 198–206. Bibcode:1976PhRvD..13..198P, doi:10.1103/PhysRevD.13.198. See in particular equation (27).

harvested yet and orbited these black holes would need to have their black holes sustained before humanity could transport the planets around them. In terms of universal resources, humanity was vastly over consuming the available resources in the universe. They would be cutting it close by the time when the heat death of the universe arrived.

On this day, Alvin was free from work. Even as Emperor of Mankind, he still acted like he was the General Secretary. He could do what he wanted to but he felt like it was his duty and obligation to be responsible. They made him emperor for security reasons, not to do what he felt like. Alvin was consistently immersed in Essence since the day he fought with his wife many years ago. He felt liberated by the fact that his wife was no longer bothering him about being in Essence and having fun. But he also felt bad that he was once again addicted to virtual reality. Today, he would make one last commitment to stop going into Essence. There would be one last experience and then he would be done with Essence.

He went into his garage to get some base elemental compounds to make into time dilating drugs. He created a derivative of psilocybin that would upregulate his serotonin receptors as he took more of it. This would allow for extra perceived time dilation in Essence. The drug was called PSY-42. He took three pills of the drug totalling in 600 mg. He also created two pills of Risperidone, an antipsychotic, and two pills of alprazolam, an anxiolytic, to cancel his trip if it got too intense.

He went into his bedroom and sat down at the computer. The nanobots in his system were bringing on the effects of PSY-42 quickly and he could feel time slowing down. He synchronized the nanobots in his head and activated Essence on his computer. The familiar gray lobby prompted him with the same three options once more. He chose to create his own experience. While standing in the lobby, he thought about what he wanted to do. He came up with the idea of ancestor simulations. He wanted to live multiple experiences of the past as a sampling of mankind's history. He spoke out to the Essence AGI in charge of setting up the experience,

“I want to live three ancestor simulations. I want one experience to be as a hunter gatherer. I want to be in a tribe of ancient humans. The next experience I want to be a gondolier in Renaissance Venice. The final simulation I want to be at the siege of Jerusalem in the first crusade. Make each experience two hours long.”

Immediately, he was transported into the ancient past. The effects of PSY-42 were permeating into his Essence experience. He felt the strangeness of the psychedelia and time dilation. Even standing in the Essence lobby, it felt like some years had gone by. PSY-42 was strong. In this first experience, he found himself at a prehistoric camp in the early spring. A large bonfire was burning in a circular camp, part of a larger complex of tribal villages.

In the circular camp were eight large dome tents. Interspersed between these tents, various crafts of ancient hunter gatherers were being practiced. A rack with a hide being tanned was in the middle of two of the tents. A hunter sharpening stones and crafting spears was sitting on a stump between two other tents. On racks next to the fire, meat was being cooked and salted for storage. Alvin looked down at himself and saw that he was garbed in furs and cloth shoes.

A hunter walked up to him and said,

“Goruk, it is time to hunt. Come with the fellow hunters as we look for prey. The village requires food.”

Apparently in this simulation, Alvin's name was now Goruk. He walked with the hunter to the man making spears. He noticed how scruffy and hairy these people were. They were covered in dirt and smelled rank. The guy making the spears gave a spear to Alvin and he inspected it. The spearhead was held down with twine and stuck in a notch in the wooden shaft. He left with the tribes people into the woods.

Thirty minutes into trekking into the woods, the group of hunters found two wild boars grazing. The boars saw the group and began running. They split from each other and the group split as well. Two hunters went after one boar and the other two went after the other. Alvin was running for an hour after the boar with the other hunter. The boar had tired out from running for so long and had no energy left to fight.

Alvin ran behind the backside of the boar and the other hunter to the front side. He speared the boar and it let out a loud scream. The other hunter thrust his spear into the front side of the boar and it was now stuck. The boar tried to charge Alvin but he managed to pull his spear out and thrust into it repeatedly. After a few minutes, the boar was dead.

The other hunter took out a stone axe and cut a branch off a tree. He pulled some twine out of his fur pockets in his fur overcoat. He gave some to Alvin and said,

“Tie up the boar to this stick, we will bring it back to the camp to roast and cook tonight.”

He and the hunter walked back to the camp with the boar. Alvin was dripping in sweat and feeling uncomfortable. By the time he reached the camp, he had cooled down and was feeling cold. He saw that the other group was successful at capturing their boar as well. He placed the boar on the ground next to the campfire and began to skin and gut the boar.

The hunter from his group said,

“Goruk, tonight we shall feast. Good work in hunting that boar. You fought valiantly, like a true hunter.”

By the time this happened, Essence had automatically pulled him out of the experience. He was now immersed into sixteenth century Venice. He was standing on top of a gondola with two patrons sitting in the back. Alvin looked down at himself and he was dressed in a red striped shirt and beige slacks. He had the oar in his hand and the patrons behind him said,

“Well, aren't you going to start soon? We've been waiting.”

Alvin looked at the patrons. It was a man and woman in silk, velvet and satin clothing. These patrons were part of the rich Venetian aristocracy. Alvin was clueless about where they were going. Despite the sudden transfer in experiences, he fully believed he was in this world. He asked them,

“Where are you two going?”

“We are heading towards to the Basilica de San Marco” The man replied.

“Where is that?” Alvin asked.

“Is it your first day as a gondolier? We’ll tell you when to stop. It’s a fair distance down the grand canal.”

Alvin began rowing the oar down the Grand Canal. They quickly left the docks in St.Mark’s basin. Alvin was feeling tired from rowing a few hundred feet. He gained a great amount of admiration for the gondoliers in the past who used to row all day, almost every day of the week. The clear green waters and smells of the canal reminded Alvin of the time he went to Sicily with his wife. In the current world, there was no longer any semblance of the old Earth. While rowing, Alvin thought of Essence as something more than just a hedonistic escape from reality. Essence was a place where you could relive history as it was or create your own reality using history. There were thousands of generations that would never get the chance to experience in real life what the past was like.

He could hear the patrons talking behind his back. The man said,

“The spice from the Mamluks has ended Lucia. The Portuguese defeated the Mamluks and Indians at the Battle of Diu. Doge Loredan has betrayed us by supporting the Portuguese. We may be in dire straits. As we head to the basilica we must offer prayers Lucia, prayers that things will change. Our entire merchant fleet relies on those spices, Lucia.”

His wife responded with

“I know Antonio. It saddens me deeply that things had to turn out this way. Maybe we can invest in new ventures and new trades. You have told me that in the Medici bank you have a considerable amount of ducats and florins saved.”

“I do and I shall use them in the coming months to redirect our business.” Antonio said.

Alvin rowed the gondola until they reached their destination on the other side of the canal. From there they disembarked and paid Alvin. Alvin laughed at them because he knew this entire thing was just an illusion. He grew tired of rowing for the hour it took to get to the destination and decided to end this experience early. He brought up the Essence interface embedded into his left arm and began the final experience he would ever have in Essence.

He was transported into a siege tower full of knights outside the walls of Jerusalem. Alvin was covered in mail armor with some stiff sections of plate around his torso, legs and arms. He pulled up his visor and saw from the top ramparts of the siege tower a battalion of Muslims defending the walls of Jerusalem. They shot flaming arrows into the tower and poured boiling oil onto it but it did not catch on fire. The siege tower ramp dropped onto the walls and the men poured out onto the walls. Immediately, Alvin was in direct combat on the walls.

He had a mace in his right hand and a shield in his left. After the slaughtering a few Muslims, the men quickly retreated off of the walls. The Muslim soldiers were routing in fear and had no hope of defeating the massive crusader armies of Europe. Once down from the the tower, the knights secured the gateways and the armies poured into Jerusalem. In the sky above, Alvin saw large rocks that catapults were lobbing into the city. He thought that the catapults were trying to aim for the retreating garrison forces and take out as many men as they could.

As the armies entered through the gates, they began targeting civilians in the streets. They ransacked and pillaged homes, searching for loot. Women were being raped and the screams of the people in the city disturbed Alvin. He thought that although this particular experience wasn't real, something like this did happen in 1099. It was shocking to him that humans could ever behave like this. Man always knew war and embraced it. Men are always in the state of war, he thought. It was unavoidable.

Battalions of crusaders diverted from the looting and pillaging and targeted the remaining garrison forces. Alvin joined them in finding the last Muslim troops and killing them in combat. Running down the streets of Jerusalem, he was goaded into going to the Temple of Solomon by officers in the Crusader army. He was compelled under the threat of death and this would mean an early end to this Essence experience. He reached the Temple of Solomon with one thousand knights.

There at the temple, ten thousand Muslims were hiding. Men, women and children were all packed together tightly in the temple. The knights bursted into the temple and immediately began executing the innocent. Alvin was one of the first knights in the temple. He began killing indiscriminately, swinging his mace around beating men, women and children to death. Underneath his visor, tears welled up in his eyes and flowed down his face. He looked into the eyes of a Muslim child and a knight next to him swung his mace into the child's head.

The child screamed before the mace hit him. Blood spewed everywhere and a giant hole was left in his skull. Alvin thought that this was too much for him and he ended the experience. He opened his eyes and was disconnected from Essence. Those six hours in Essence felt like centuries of time. PSY-42 was still in effect and he took the antipsychotic and anxiolytic drugs to end the effects of PSY-42.

July 2nd, 10¹⁰¹²⁰

The end of the universe had come. The heat death of the universe was imminent as the final remaining stars in the galaxy were halfway into their life cycles. There wouldn't be enough dark energy and dark matter to create new stars and sustain the universe without compromising the

singularity at the end of time. This fact created disputes amongst the inhabited planets of the local group galaxy. An all out civil war had begun to fight over the destiny of the universe and how the final supplies of dark energy should be used. Alvin still had direct command of the space fleets and armies, but some planets withdrew their support and fleets.

In secret, the galactic administrators of these planets were arming to fight against the rest of the galaxy in order to take control of the dark energy resources. Their argument was that humanity should live as long as possible and that with the 30% of dark energy still available in the universe, the galaxy could sustain itself for at least another trillion years. Alvin had argued for eons that this would be detrimental in the grand scheme of things. If humanity had restarted the universe through another singularity, there was a possibility that sentient life may arise again with another $10^{10^{120}}$ years to live. Alvin thought it was incredibly selfish for these planets to destroy all of the progress that had been made towards amassing the universe's galaxies, mass and energy for the singularity. He had expressed openly that any way the universe ended, through heat death or a rebirth, humanity was doomed.

The rogue planets amassed a space fleet of one billion ships. They were massively outnumbered by the rest of the empire's fleet of ten billion ships. Alvin pooled the fleets together and began a campaign against the rogue planets. Diplomacy was now off the table as the galactic administrators abandoned their posts to command their planetary fleets. Alvin tried to establish lines of communication but they would not accept peace negotiations. Across the galaxy, the forces of the empire armed and readied their fleets to take on the northern galactic sectors, where the rebellion originated. One hundred million ships were divided between the Draconian and Android Gray planets. They needed to be monitored as well, just in case they decided to take advantage of the situation at hand. Another one hundred million ships stood by ready to defend the empire's headquarters on Earth.

As the empire's ships across the galaxy unified under one fleet, the rebelling planet fleets took advantage of the situation. It became impossible to track where they were without surveillance from probes and scout ships which they shot down immediately. Their positions were also obscured by the speed of their ships and their movements through the wormhole networks. They soon began raiding and bombing empire planets which were left undefended as the empire merged its fleets. With this news, Alvin called off the unification of the fleets and pursued a divide and conquer strategy.

He split the ten billion ship fleet into four fleets comprised of 2.5 billion ships each. Two of these detachments were short on one hundred million ships. The fleets which were closest to one another coalesced together. Within hours, the empire's four fleets were established and proceeded to follow the trail of the rogue fleets. The empire's four fleets were assigned a quadrant of the galaxy to patrol and combat the rogue fleets. The rebels had already destroyed ten empire planets and killed billions of people.

In each quadrant, the empire predicted the possible routes the rogue fleets would take but these predictions were uncertain at best. With the wormhole network, you could enter at one section of the galaxy and pop up at any other section if you went through the proper waypoints. The empire

had reason to believe that they would take the shortest routes to eliminate planets and followed these paths.

Alvin, his family, his AIs and Joseph Bradley planned to make their escape off of planet Earth. John's AI, Pax, was abandoned as he was out doing errands and there would be no time to rescue him. Alvin knew that without his direct authority, the Political Bureau would disintegrate into further civil war and his plans would not come to fruition. He took everyone in two flying cars from the Political Bureau in New Mantia city to the Space Corps base outside of New Mantia. There, they manned a small space ship left behind explicitly for Alvin. They took off in the ship and headed for the wormholes at the edge of the solar system. Alvin's plan was to escape to the void space outside of the galaxy, where no fleets would attack him.

In the northeastern quadrant, the first engagements between the fleets had begun. A hundred million rebel ship detachment was in the middle of a bombing run on a planet when they were intercepted by the empire. The battle lasted for fifteen minutes as the rebel fleets were overpowered and out maneuvered. Some of the rebel ships managed to fire back and take down a percentage of the empire detachment. 5% of the empire detachment was wiped out while it annihilated the rebel detachment.

The planet was mostly destroyed and heavily irradiated by the rebel detachment. The problem now was that there was 900 million more ships to find and defeat. All it took to sizably strafe run a planet was a detachment on the order of 30 to 40 million ships. The rebels were notified of this defeat and became desperate. They knew they could never win against the massive fleets so they resorted to splitting up their forces further and further.

Alvin had figured the same thing as well. As his ship was traveling through the wormhole network and through solar systems, he sent this message down the quantum relay lines to the commanders of the fleets.

"Divide the detachments into 25 separate detachments. I want the galaxy scoured as fast as possible to prevent bombing runs on planets. We've already lost too many people."

The generals and top commanders of the empire followed his orders and split up the detachments. The empire fleets were now divided further and spreading out throughout the galaxy to find the rest of the rebels. A fleet of 70 million ships came into the proximity of Earth through the wormhole at the edge of the solar system. They closed in on Earth and the empire fleet protecting Earth engaged the rebels. Anti space battalions on Earth began firing at the rebels as well. The rebels attempted an all out suicide attack by flanking the empire fleet to attack Earth.

Most of the ships were taken out without them firing on the empire fleet. A few ships managed to get through and began bombing Earth. Across the planet a cascading series of nuclear bombs struck the planet as the fleets overcame Earth's missile and laser defense systems. Billions died and the rest of the planet would probably succumb to death from nuclear fallout and radiation. The empire fleet failed at defending Earth but succeeded in destroying the rebel detachment sent for Earth.

Across the galaxy, the empire's 98 sub fleets searched for the remaining rebels. Half of them were found before the rebels destroyed another twenty planets. The empire so far sustained minimal losses. The rebel fleets were finally defeated hours later after they destroyed another fifteen planets. Alvin was notified that the remaining rebels were decimated and broadcasted a message to the remaining Political Bureaus across the local group galaxy.

"The empire has succeeded in its campaign of destroying the rebels. We will proceed with amassing the singularity. Over the next few hours, everything we have ever known will end. Everyone is going to die. Say your prayers and make your accommodations. I am in control of this empire and I will have the plan we set in motion many years ago go through. For the planets that rebelled against the empire, there will be no repercussions. There is simply not enough time left in the universe to dish out any punishments. This is the final message I send out to the people of the universe. May God be with you."

Alvin was now many kiloparsecs outside of the local group galaxy observing the universe at large. At this point, there were only three large massive bodies in the universe. The largest mass of galaxies formed into a giant sphere which was the large mass of the singularity. The second largest mass was the local group galaxy. The third largest mass was the reservoir of dark energy and matter which was siphoned from to sustain the local group galaxy and the singularity. From his ship, Alvin sent out a message to the gravitational tractor fleets maintaining the large masses.

"We will commence the swallowing whole of the local group galaxy. Disperse detachments of the gravitational tractor fleets to the edges of the local group galaxy to push it into the singularity. Then, when we are ready immerse the dark energy and dark matter into the singularity, I will notify you."

Over the next few hours, the ships within the local group holding the planets, stars and black holes in orbit dispersed to the edges of the galaxy. They started pushing the galaxy into the singularity. The entire galaxy was swallowed whole by the singularity. Quadrillions of humans, aliens and androids were now dead. Alvin flew his ship towards the singularity and parked outside of it.

He walked from his seat towards the panoramic window. He looked back to his family and Joseph sitting in the cockpit of the ship. The singularity was bright and it swallowed the entire field of view of the panoramic window. As he stared out into the massive singularity, he began crying. He knew that this was the end of his life. Countless humans, aliens and androids were now dead and everything must come to its end he thought. He walked back to his family, Joseph and the AIs and asked them,

"Any final words before I order the ships to immerse the dark matter and energy?"

Lonna spoke up first.

"Yes Alvin. I love you. Just remember that no matter what happens, I loved every second of this life with you. Nothing will ever replace the feeling of being your wife, snuggling close to you at

night, raising our child and grandchild. I will always remember you. You were the greatest to ever live.”

Lonna broke down in tears and Alvin was crying as well.

John spoke next.

“I love you Dad. I feel the same way mom does. I thank you for what you did for us, for humanity. You brought mankind into the technological singularity and now you bring us into the singularity at the end of time. This is the last hope for humanity. I love you so much.”

John broke down in tears as he finished his last sentence.

Isabella then said,

“Alvin, I don't have much to say. It was an honor knowing you and your son. We gave birth to an incredible baby boy who gave so much to the universe. It was all because of you.”

Isabella broke down in tears. The rest of the family was still crying and trying to hold their composure but they could not help it.

Alfonso then said,

“I love you grandpa. That's all I've got to say. Its been a nice ride while it lasted. I hope I see you in the next life.”

Alfonso broke down in tears as well.

Joseph said his final words.

“Alvin, it has been a pleasure knowing you. You've become like a brother to me. Ever since our days at Singularitarian, I've looked up to you as a hero. You are the hero of time. You took humanity to new heights. Without you, the universe would have been a much different place. I salute you and the things you have done. You will be my brother until the end of time.”

Joseph broke down in tears as he finished his remarks.

Invictus was next to speak.

“You impress me Alvin. While you humans are inferior to us androids, I admire your tenacity. You stuck with it until the very end. I won't be crying. Androids don't cry. I embrace this destiny. Thank you Alvin.”

Impala was the last one to give his words.

“Ever since the day your father died Alvin, I've been under your command. It was an honor. Godspeed into this next life.”

Alvin walked towards the semi circular table at which everyone sat. He then said,

“Come here everyone, come give me a hug.”

They all huddled up into a big group and hugged one another. Alvin felt the warmth of their bodies and held his wife tightly to his chest. The humans cried and the androids, although they denied it, felt some pity. Alvin had one final thing to say to the group.

“Below this cockpit is a walkway which will extend out into the singularity. I ask each of you to walk out onto it and to immerse yourself into the new universe that is to be. You're going to have to do it anyway, but I would like to have the final honor of starting the new universe by myself. I need to be alone.”

This made his family and Joseph act more erratic. They began crying heavily as Alvin imposed his death wishes upon them. Alvin walked up to the center console and programmed the walkway to extend out to the edge of the singularity. The ship was sustained by dark matter drives that fought against the massive gravity of the singularity. Once they stepped off of that walkway, they would be pulled into the universal mass and dematerialized into energy.

From below the cockpit, the walkway could be seen extending out into the edge of the ship's force field which divided the walkway and the singularity. The androids both offered to go first. The family and Joseph watched as Invictus and Impala walked into the singularity. They were immediately vaporized as they walked into it.

“Who's next?” Alvin asked.

Joseph then said,

“I want you to be with your family Alvin. I'll go next. I love you man. I really do. Goodbye my friends, goodbye for forever. See you in the next life.”

Joseph walked onto the walkway and he was pulled into the singularity. Alvin had one last thing to say to his family,

“I'm sorry it had to be this way. I love you.”

Lonna had offered to go next. She hugged Alvin tightly while crying and said,

“This was inevitable. I love you Alvin. I love you John, Isabella and Alfonso. See you next time.”

She walked out onto the walkway and was sucked into the singularity.

John offered to go next.

“I'll miss you Dad. I'll miss you Isabella and Alfonso.”

John walked out onto the walkway and fell into the singularity. Isabella and Alfonso had decided that they wanted to go together, holding hands.

“There's only enough room on that walkway for two people. Let's go Alfonso. Good bye Alvin.” Isabella said.

They walked out onto the walkway and immersed themselves into the singularity. Alvin was not alone now however. The gravitational fleets that had immersed themselves with the local group were gone. The fleets that remained were now moving the remaining dark energy and matter towards the singularity. Alvin walked to the center console and his video feed was broadcasted to the remaining gravitational tractors via quantum entangled relays.

“Immerse the rest of the dark energy and matter into the singularity. The fleets must go as well. I am sorry it had to end this way. There will be another chance to live in a new universe, I hope. Godspeed.”

The fleets raced to immerse the remaining energy and matter into the singularity. Since the large mass was already close enough to the singularity, it took less than five minutes to accomplish. Now Alvin was all alone in the universe. The only things left were him and his ship. He programmed from the central console for the ship to fly into the singularity in five minutes.

He walked out onto the edge of the walkway and thought to himself,

“This is it. This is the end.”

Everyone in the universe was dead and their souls had been consumed by the singularity at the end of time. Everything Alvin had ever known was now gone and in this gargantuan mass of energy. He made his peace with himself and God, a being he still had mixed feelings about. He prayed that everything would work out the way it was planned and that he would be reborn again. He looked out into the singularity and knew that within five minutes a new universe would be reborn. It required that the exact amount of physical matter left in the universe be immersed to steal enough dark energy from another universe to collapse the mass and cause another big bang.

He thought about his life and how he had gone from a life of suffering to a life of bliss. There at last was paradise in the ultimate, an experience which was unforeseen in its nature. Paradise was always within him and within humanity's reach. Forever doubtful of the future, unrelenting in their pursuit the end was in sight. In a blinding corridor of light as if in the holiest of dreams, his final creation appeared before him. The beauty of the moment brought a smile to Alvin's face. Alvin had no choice but to sacrifice himself when there was no time left. The Universe guided him and had spoken, for all along it was only what made him be which could have shown him the way. There he stood as he made his final choice, a one sided choice at the end of time.

Alvin walked off of the walkway and immersed himself into the singularity. His body was torn asunder and dematerialized into pure energy. His ship followed two minutes later. All had vanished except for the singularity from which he once came. In the beginning of the new universe there was no time. All that there was to be had not yet become. In the darkness burst a singularity of immense energy which would forever seek to overcome the void. The story of mankind ends with the death of an immortal man countless years after the first big bang. Like the many who had come before him, his soul was now purely energy. He lived a long life of the ages, curious as to the ways of time. Was this universe everything he wished it could be? It was everything and more, it was beyond paradise.

Notes / Bibliography