

ARK

ORTICELLI

Luciano DeSanctis

Tanitha's and Nārmer's long war has ended, bringing peace, security and immortality. The new technological prospect of making a new life cycle with each other was breathtaking. Now, with their new body-forms, they have a chance to rekindle their romance.

But was that — enough?

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Luciano E. DeSanctis

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For Antonietta, Leva, Domenica, Verina
and you . . . Donato.

For supporting and encouraging me
to believe in myself.

I love you all.



My heartfelt thanks and appreciation

to Paolo N. DeSanctis.

For his support with the book graphic projec

PREFACE

Enslaved by our own ingenuity, we have constructed a synthetic world, and, as a species, we have never been less human than we are right now. Greed, corruption, consumerism, and wars have been a grim and fearful fee during the age of Pisces in an attempt to satisfy our ego, which in turn gave rise to attitudes of prejudice and separateness. Just as the age of Pisces gave us both Jesus and the Inquisition, the tide of the Aquarian age has brought us extraordinary technological breakthroughs as well as spiritual incompleteness. Myths, religions, consummation of natural organisms, and along with artificial chemical substances, have failed us as a major component of reaching enlightenment to a higher self. The evolved simulated world of our intelligent machines was to be a sort of prosthesis for human reasoning: a tool that should have, as a matter of course, accelerated the transformation of our awareness into the fourth dimension and onto the way of enlightenment to oneness with Mother Earth and the cosmos. Nevertheless, that baton has been passed to a new species of our own creation; therefore, it is not from the womb of nature. Henceforth, it is Homo

evolutis, not we, who will be twirling with our sun across the Aquarius constellation. Thus, we leave the world a mark of our creativity, an adaptable artificial genius that has no aura, no soul, and no humanity—just wishful thinking. And we, like the rest of the hominids, pass on into history, showing only our ineptness in this third-dimensional domain, and withstanding the steps to follow in the way of the order of things. This story is about our creation, and how an addictive desire of domination and conquest can lead to—nothingness.

PRELUDE

Homo sapiens' Last War was a century-long and costly, dwindling the billions of human populations to nearly nothing. The war was divided by geographical lines from all four hemispheres of the globe. It became like all other wars fought over economics and government. However, in this circumstance, the 21st-century catastrophic financial crisis of the world was the spark that caused separation between shadowy elitists of wealthy and powerful oligarchy of banks, corporations, dynastic families, and institutions in fighting one another over monopolizing the world's resources and world domination. Even after years of devastation, after all the oppression that was, after all the trespasses over the will of nature, in a bleak, dying earth where between ninety-eight and ninety-nine percent of known life became extinct, the elitist-survivors blindly carried on their warfare without intermission. These humans lived like moles in various self-sustained underground shelters and tunnels around the globe, leaving their battle to the machines to fight it out. They considered the war like it was a chess game. If the war

Were the World Series, these elitists would be like an umpire, rather than a player. Judging their war machines “or their tactics, for control of the world's future or rather for the survival of the fittest.” One reason the war had lasted so long was because of technological advances invented between adversaries in their respective hemisphere. They considered that it would end the war and their position would benefit humanity in a new world order. Thus, it was brought to light that a few thousand of these humans were left on Earth and soon after the war ceased, their lives became pointless. Peacetime came about with a new development in the science of biology by the West. A radical transformation occurred from the use of stem cell therapy, also called therapeutic cloning. It was to treat or prevent a disease or condition. This new technology uses biosynthetic polymers that carried the same information as nature's own, however, with a different assemblage of molecules. Unlike DNA and RNA, the synthetic macromolecule was more superior and a body could be especially designed to adapt to different environments. With this new technology, only the physical bodies are copied, and that consciousness's are the originals, simply transferred from one body form to another. This sophisticated cloning procedure was called a

metempsychosis transfer. As follows, the genetic mixture from the survivors evolved a population of about five hundred million genetically engineered people and with it a new order and a new empire emerged. With the science of Quantum Physics supporting the technology, it is assumed and taken for granted that the technology was the fountain of immortality. It is a leap of faith taken by most of the new generation of creatures who called themselves Homo evolutis. These creatures saw themselves as a new species. In essence, they felt they were the new gods, or they were in the process of becoming one. Consequently, it happened that artificial evolution became the means of rebuilding Earth's ecosystem."

HOMO SAPIENS' LAST WAR

“Sir Abraam, you are distressed, are you not?” asked the machine in a monotonic unisex tone. The voice startled the Caucasian dwarfed old man who was wholly captivated by the music of Brahms—Violin Sonata No. 3. A blinking rainbow of dancing colors came from the monitor as it spoke from the anti-gravity computerized medical chair called the Robo Chair, which was a function of an artificial intelligence running the systems of the new world government: The Republic of the United World States. The artificial intelligence was named Chief of Custodians, and those that created it claim it is guaranteed not to become sentient, but rather to diligently be obedient to human social order. Narmer sighed, as he sat devitalized in his Robo Chair. His jaws tightened, but no words escaped him. He simply wanted a tranquil transit with pleasant music while he went through the tubular-shaped automated earth-toned hallway, which resembled a garden walkway. He maintained his focus on the music as the carbon black Robo Chair, with adjustable comfy seat and footrest, drifted “towards the Metempsychosis Transporter Center, which was a part of a dome building in London. Knowing that his breathing had become much more labored and uneven than usual. For at that point, he discovered that he was worse off than he had been aware, and he was rapidly sinking under the pressure of the infirmities of old age.” Sir Abraam, your vital signs have ranged

to severe levels and—” The voice amplified through the monitor as if protesting, resounding in Narmer’s mind. Narmer didn’t answer. vital signs are not stable and are not within normal limits.” Instantly, Narmer’s gray, coarse brows deeply furrowed. His cheeks drooped towards his turkey neck, as he glared down at the monitor. He shook his head, closed his eyes to the interruption, and then griped, “Silence!” And he went on listening to the music. But the machine persisted. “I am afraid that I am not programmed to be silent on this matter. Your vital signs are showing—” “Yes-yes, I am dying!” Narmer interrupted with a huff, glaring profusely at the flat-screened monitor. “Affirmative. Data shows your anatomy is becoming functionless; however, medication treatment is still available to ease your discomfort—

“Oh, shush.” Narmer coughed at those words.

“It annoyingly went on, “— Shall I administer the treatment?” Narmer just huffed again and rolled his eyes away from the screen, and for a few seconds he quickly glanced over the right side of the wall at an artificial crystal-clear river that blended with the soft, cloudy blue sky. He then glared back at the monitor with defiance. He was about to cuss at it when a sudden burst of gasps and wheezes took over. His gasps for breath lasted what seemed to him a slow-motion moment, until it subsided. His feeling thereupon was the remaining of sharp pain echoing and throbbing throughout his whole body, and it was attempting to stop him from replying. But he cleared his throat and managed to whisper a command with suspicion,

“Hell no, robo! Let me be clear—No injections — No chemicals whatsoever!” When he spoke, his voice became scratchy and hoarse. He sounded weaker; however, his dark eyes sparkled with hope. He went on after a tremulous pause for emotional control, “Do you bloody understand, No?”

“Affirmative.”

Narmer then went back listening to the music. His eyes swayed back and forth at the themed garden of the hallway as he drifted along to his destination. By now, the pleasantness of the music was spoiled. Suddenly, he “swallowed and made a face with a motion to lift his arms up into the air. His eyes, looking more disgruntled at the monitor, said, “Oh well—what's the use! Robo, end the music!” He sighed. His lips twitched up in a smirk, adding, “You have ruined this lovely sonata for me!” He wasn't sure why, for some unknown reason, automated voices annoyed him more than anything. Nonetheless, it just did, secretly annoying him in every possible way. It could be that he was born into an automated society where everything comes in handy, or maybe it was that his life had been mostly monotonous and ingrained, serving him no more than routine: he woke up, he went to work at the Science Center, he went to some sort of entertainment, and then back to bed.

“My apologies, Sir Abraam. However, I must question your motives for why you do not want to ease your discomfort?”

As Narmer inadvertently watched the sparks of the rainbow voice dancing away from the monitor, again, the sudden attack came to him, and for a moment, he fought the shortness of

breath until finally, the pain and discomfort dissipated enough for him to answer. “Because for all I know, this body is by nature. It's originally me. At my age, I have been fortunate enough to have a body virgin from devices, either external or “implanted with no synthetic whatsoever... .” He was about to say more, but his glance at the monitor stopped him, “... oh, you don't bloody get me.”

“Affirmative, it does not compute why you do not want to alleviate your discomfort?”

Narmer cleared his throat, and he scowled doubtfully at the monitor. “I, for one, prefer to keep what goes in this body as natural as possible—it's my desire for cremation.”

“Why is this significant?”

Narmer drew in a long breath, followed by a slight wet tickle-in-the-throat cough, and then he shook his white, Einstein-like-haired head and shrugged his small shoulders in anticipation. “Umm . . .” he cleared his throat once more, “. . . I prefer to think of this poor shell of a body of mine as sacred. I want to have the cremated remains be made into a genetic code soul gem keepsake. Do I make myself clear?” All the talking had made him light-headed, and he paused for a moment before asking, “I suppose this is an expression of Homo evolutis' mode in the new order, isn't it?”

“Affirmative.”

“Right—Oh Custodian, my point is on the mark! When in Rome, do as Romans do.”

“Error—you are in London,” responded the machine.

Narmer gave an amusing smirk, “well, I suppose so.” A slight nostalgic look then came to his face as he went on. “As you know, this body is one of the last of its kind: I am pure Homo sapiens.

“Affirmative. You and Lady Tanatha are the last dwarf of this species; however, pure or not, it does not compute why this is significant when Homo sapiens is simply an obsolete species that is being upgraded?”

“Narmer jerked his head in the direction where the Robo Chair was going with a low, bitter chuckle. He then eyed the monitor with a half grin and a half scorn and scoffed, “Oh, bloody awful, you would concoct that logic.” He shook his head, saying, “It’s not important for you to ‘compute’ with this matter— just get me there,” he ordered with a more eager tone of voice. His trembling finger then swiped up on the white menu bar at the bottom of the screen, showing the route and the estimated travel time, which read 00:11:00. He glanced at the date, November 11, 2118, and thought of what a lousy life it had been as a miniature-scale human figure. Narmer came to believe that his bad luck was the result of unpropitious times. His life had been quite a strange one indeed, of one inner strife and tragedy after another. Of his life, “Narmer came to believe that his bad luck was the result of unpropitious times. His life had been quite a strange one indeed, of one inner strife and tragedy after another. Of his life, Narmer came to believe it to be a mere spark from the infinite nothingness; a spark that appears, flickers, and “dies back to nothingness, forever.

Fortunately for him, he was able to cope with his dying due to the new technology of the mind-photon transporter machine, called the Metempsychosis Transporter. The machine was a technological breakthrough that changed everything in his world, for it scientifically made it possible for immortality. Such a heavenly existence was exciting and a bit intimidating as well, because he wasn't quite sure that the three weeks of training for the transition were quite enough time of preparation.

“In his scientific thinking, there were some personal doubts that can only be answered by experience, such as: what would it feel like being long-term as a dead human in a superior synthetic body form? What then will he become? Will he personally be able to adapt, and if so, how long would that take? Nevertheless, as peculiar as it was, it was a remarkable invention by any standards. The breakthrough had completely transformed those he was acquainted with like night and day. From what he heard, the human mind in a Homo evolutis body form was an amazing and spectacular experience, and that gave him all the faith he needed to go on. As it was expected, the new life came with new rules, and as a traditionalist that he was, it was a life he would have to get to know. He smirked at an odd rule that came to mind, that it was “customary to go by first name basis only, ending the surnames altogether. With being a Homo evolutis, ancestry was becoming obsolete, and it was quickly becoming fashionable to regard Homo sapiens as a cruel parody of the new order. But Narmer was quite unenthusiastic about the idea, thinking, *I guess there goes the*

family tree tradition! The whispered thought moved his lips as he quietly contemplated its meaning. *Anyway, he thought, I'll soon know all about it, won't I? Whatever happens — happens; the outcome is better than the alternative of being erased from existence.*

Narmer looked down at the estimated travel time, now reading, 00:05:60, and as he approached the doors of the Metempsychosis Transporter Center, his optimism cooled and turned flat. His wife was on his mind, and so was the familiar fear that had set in again. His thoughts suddenly ran in faulty rings round and round in his mind, playing out the same old scenarios and consequences of years of marital bickering and estrangement, which had caused a deep-seated bitterness between them. *Our new life will be totally different from anything we've done*, he thought.

At nineteen years old, in the sunrise of the Last War, he had met Tanatha Quintilla, who was a dwarf as well. They had fallen in love with each other and went steady “for three years before becoming engaged. They were both twenty-two years old when they married in her hometown in Rome, where it happened to be a place of neutrality and the safest place at the time. Immediately afterwards, they had a son, Naenio, who became, over the course of time, a five-feet, nine-inches giant to them both, and he became a fine botanist at the 'Museum in Orto Botanico' in Rome, only to lose him at the age of 29, from the dreaded 2047 Urban London guerrilla warfare. “In those days, his identity as an astrophysicist was unknown in London, not to

mention that he was part of a high-ranking circle of military scientists belonging to a specialized domain of science that was working on secret weapons projects. However, the Londoners and others simply saw him as a second lieutenant military officer with a cushy desk job assisting the public relations officer. His professional military career lasted throughout his son's youthful years, leaving his wife to raise the boy alone. If truth were told, the mentality of the war had so consumed him that it had completely unprepared him to be a father, let alone a husband. The world, at that period, was a titanic land battle, and it had taken love out of everyone's lives. Like most military men, he had become impersonal, almost sociopathic. Usually, the feeling of melancholy about being away from his family only “happened once in a while, like during holidays; he then felt some guilt about being far away. Usually, he was comfortable being alone with the entrusted duty as a science officer, which kept him with his regiment. What made family matters worse was that he seldom did get a military leave to go see them. “The often-inspiring explanation to his family was 'I don't know when, but we'll get together then'. And the waiting was quite disturbing to his wife. Because after a substantial amount of time apart, she wanted him home. Granting that she was close to a loving string of relatives— aunts, uncles, cousins, and inseparable parents—along with two sisters' families. The separation, however, had distanced his wife emotionally from him, and she had had enough of being a military scientist's wife. Even so, by virtue of patriotism,

he had no choice but to ignore her expressed wishes to resign. Narmer just couldn't agree with his wife because his science work was deemed too vital for the war effort. Besides, it would have been his reputation that would have suffered, and his resignation would have substantially damaged his prestige with the new ruling class and in the science sphere. Not to mention that he wouldn't have also been credited for ending the war. At that moment, it suddenly struck him as ironic that his recognition of his science achievements was not only a war success but also related to his son's death. The bright future he had fought for so long had come, and yet, as a bereaved parent, he found himself shunned like a leper. Since the tragedy, his wife and he had lost their intimacy. Up until now, they had slept in separate bedrooms, and still today, they do not ever speak about the death of their son. Obviously, they'll never recover from this shock, not in this life cycle.

“Oh, how I wished I could undo what I'd done, his thought ran on and on... but I was busy with my work; it was too important to be interrupted! Narmer couldn't find words to soothe him. No! He suddenly counteracted his thoughts. If only I had taken the leave there in Rome when I had the chance, Naenio would certainly be here.

Naenio was known to be stubborn, unruly, and with traits of narcissism. He was naively neglected by his father and overly indulged by his codependent mother. He was a Roman civilian who undertook some foolish adventures during the war, like deciding to surprise his father out of the blue in London.

Whereas he walked into the wrong time, the wrong place, the wrong bloodshed—straight into a bombing raid.

“Narmer liked to think his son visited out of love, rather than resentment. That’s how he saw it, and he wouldn’t challenge his thought of it. The more Narmer thought of the unspent years with his son, the more it pained him, and the more he was consumed by the recurring thought of his wife’s displeasure with him.

All at once, the weird and uncomfortable negligent twitch in his right eye appeared, and he attempted to obviate the annoyance out of his head. Darn, what was I thinking? I certainly wouldn’t harm the project taking leave for a few days, he thought, slowly raising his remorseful eyes to the ceiling of the hall. A quiver then suddenly ran up his belly. He then shook the miserable thought off his mind with a quick vision that something good in the new life was hiding there with him and his wife, like some spark of love to each other hoping to revive their dissolution of intimacy.

At that instant, like a god who lost a match, his old resentment resurfaced, and he quickly reconsidered his pessimistic view of his family’s tragedy. She can’t bloody blame me for his actions! The East forces waged a vicious war that day in London — how could I have known? He paused for breath, then continued thinking, “I will make it right as her new husband in our new life cycle! Yes, we will both make it right!” Narmer presumed his wife was already there somewhere in the Metempsychosis Transporter facility, possibly recuperating from

her own metempsychosis transfer. But he wasn't sure. Because, upon their admissions, they were confined in their own respected care unit. Thereupon, after all that reflection, Narmer felt a bit gratified that they were able to solve some of their marital problems. At least, the insignificant and trivial bickering they were used to having with each other was finally over; they were now talking like humans again as if nothing had happened. And it's about time they got over it. Enough's enough, he thought. For too long, their son's death had made them extremely morbid in regard to their lives or the world in general. That is until the invention of the Metempsychosis Transporter Machine. The prospect of making a new life cycle with each other was breathtaking. They now have a chance to rekindle their romance and be able to live a happy life. They both recognized that perhaps it was exactly what they needed to continue to grow and repair their love, trust, and fulfillment of their relationship; they therefore made an endeavor to live the life they had imagined.

As Narmer glanced at the door sign, a sudden enthusiasm for adventure set in. A slight rosy blush came to his cheeks as his mind raced to the thoughts of becoming the adaptable humanoid that would live one hundred and thirty-three years before his consciousness would be transported again to another body form. This time, under this new republic, it will be unlike any other past government. Finally, it is our time now. Our new life is the opportunity for us to start over again. Yes, it will be good, he thought. Immediately, the Robo Chair took him

through an auto-sliding double door with an electronic sign above the doors that read:

WELCOME TO THE METEMPSYCHOSIS TRANSPORTER CENTER.



Once “inside the waiting area, the Robo Chair stopped. “You have arrived at your destination point,” said the machine. It was Narmer’s first time in the room, and he was silent for a brief moment as his eyes darted across the room. Traditional and dull, the room bored him quickly; because contrary to the hallway appearances, this particular room embraced a metallic trend, in a shiny intergalactic style that he was accustomed to in his culture. Narmer then lowered his chin to the monitor, and scoffed, “Yes, I can bloody see that!” And he said quickly, “just take me to the reception area!” Along the way, he kept glancing around, until he noticed some of the people sitting in the waiting area. Most of them glanced back at him kindly, but there were “a few who looked at him with an impartial expression, which made him realize that he was among forgiven former war enemies. He couldn’t help but eye the colorful fashionable tunics and robes worn by both genders of the Athenian Era, which had come back in popularity. When he tipped his head slightly to the side to look over to two familiar-

looking pre-adult Asian female and male that happened to be Homo evolutis, he whispered, “Mhmm, do I know those two from before?” His vision was weak and the view was not as clear as he would like it to be. As Narmer passed by the couple, he attempted to catch their eyes, but at that moment, they were centered on each other, which passed in slow motion. He had to twist his achy head to keep looking as he drifted along. After seeing they were too absorbed with each other, he rolled his dry tongue around inside his eager mouth, watching them kissing and fondling as if they couldn't resist. Seeing them interlocked in each other's arms, the glimpse of the truth of their erotic obsession suddenly had evoked his memories of pure feelings of youthfulness. Granting the air of freshness and playfulness, the tactile sensations, however, dissipated in seconds by his throbs of pain, which coincided with his heart's pulse-beat.

The room circuit cameras signaled the Robo Chair the view of an Asian couple. “Negative, Sir Abraam, you do not know them from the past,” answered the machine, “Sir Suman and Lady Maninder were Homo sapiens from the East and they were your enemy during the warfare. As you are aware, the two have successfully accomplished their metempsychosis transfer, and they are now waiting for the metempsychosis

transfer of their son, Sir Ravi, before going back with him to Lumbini, Nepal.

A son? Narmer wondered. His small smile showed a touch of chagrin. At that thought, Narmer attempted once more to dismiss the past; accept it; learn from it: trying to embrace the dawn of the Age of Aquarius. As he approached the reception, his eyes widened upon the site of the eight-foot exoskeleton robot blankly staring at him in attendance with its creepy bright jaundice metallic eyes.

Greeting, Sir Abraam, I am number 65! Your appointment is confirmed with Professor Morton,” said the robot standing in front of a clear acrylic podium. The metallic face smiled slightly. The voice pitch was slightly higher than that of the Robo Chair monitor, but the tone of thought and manner of voice was the same, since all machines operated by a central processing unit of the Chief Custodian. Aside from their monotonic voices, all “automatons wore naturally a solemn expression, which distinguished them from any hominid or animal alike. “I will escort you to the metempsychosis transporter room, please follow me . . .”

Narmer nodded at the machine like a wise, old, wide-eyed owl. He was about to say something witty about his new life, but the lightheadedness and the coughing stopped him from doing so; instead, he fought his misery by looking back at the

very youthful lovers with delight. *I'll be joining them soon, in this free world, with no more wars to be contended with*, he thought, submitting faithfully to his plan for his immortality.

At that instant, the escort robot went on saying, “. . . you have been made aware your vital signs are unstable and you must hurry. Your replica biosynthetic body is waiting and it is in my computation that you are overdue for your new life.” Moreover, the robot read Narmer's facial expression as distress and then said, “Sir Narmer, it is totally normal to feel anxious before a metempsychosis transfer. Nevertheless, the procedure is perfectly safe!”

Narmer scoffed at the robot, taking some deep but shallow breaths trying to express his thoughts. “Look, number whatever you are . . .”

The robot suddenly interrupted, “I am number sixty-five!”

“. . . Well, number sixty-five, you observed me wrong, and if you're ‘computing’ that I am afraid of this here transfer, you're bloody wrong. For what it's worth, at my age of one-hundred and one, I've learned to live a courageously long life in the midst of war that was both personal and patriotic.”

“Affirmative, Sir Abraam,” bowed the machine, “and with the New Republic, harmony and serenity are waiting for those of victory who care to walk the new life of Homo evolutis.”\

Narmer made a slight face of acknowledgment, raising his trembling finger straight to the robot, “yes-yes — enough!” he said feebly, being bothered by the robot’s praise as well as his depressing memories. “You fail to understand that peace came with the complete ending of nature’s humanity.” He gasped and he couldn’t say more about the past: the losses of friends, of relatives, and of course his son was quite uncomfortable.

“Affirmative. Homo sapiens is an obsolete species of life form that is being upgraded to Homo Evolutis in the new order of things. Are you ready to be upgraded?”

Narmer was silent to that question, and more of a practical thought came to his mind about his old, failing body. *Oh well, that’s how it is, everything ends in death — everything.* He then nodded and whispered, feebly to the robot, “Proceed!” He carried on by turning his head to the lovers sitting in the waiting area and back to the robot with a pleasant squint-eye, and added, “I am looking forward to the pursuit of happiness like them two over there, living a romantic humanoid lifestyle.”

“Affirmative, Sir Abraam,” answered the escort robot with a light bow.

After seeing the machine’s respectful demeanor, Narmer genuinely accepted the robot’s words and then ordered the Robo Chair to follow the escort robot inside the Intensive Care

Unit, where there was a circular nurse's station surrounded by eight clear acrylic-walled recovery rooms.

As the Robo Chair drifted by, following the escort robot crossing over the 'Recovery Room', Narmer scanned around the room between some of the medical robots involved in their care. He questioned where the flourishing humanoid Professor was and thought, *Damn, how could I have blanked out his name!* The synthetic biologist and he knew each other on and off in a couple of different periods of their lifetimes. At one time they were assigned to the science team of the Antigone Project, which was a research and development project that produced Smart Pathogens as cyborg-weapons of mass destruction to conquer the East. Suddenly, Morton popped into his mind. *Right-O — his name is Morton Benjamin!*

Just then, as the Robo Chair drifted on, Narmer recognized him in his new body form inside a room tending to a sickly middle-aged human individual with characteristics of the East Asian genus. *Ah, I guess that chap must be Ravi,* he thought. As he passed by another room, unheard by him, a feeble, but high-pitched female voice suddenly cried out, “Narmer . . .” Seeing no response, she then ordered, “Robo escorting Sir Narmer Abraam . . . stop! Let me talk to him!” Both the Robo Chair and the robot slowed to a quick halt.

“What are you doing, number 67?” Narmer gripped with a sudden burst of gasps and wheezes.

“Error! I am escort Robo-65! Lady Tanatha would like to speak to you,” said the robot and pointed its metallic finger to the room where his wife was recovering.

“Narmer, look over here — it's me!”

Disoriented, Narmer cleared his throat, “What?” He questioned as he turned his head toward the strange voice and to an unrecognizable young girl lying on the high-tech bed. Narmer's vision, as weak as it was, he still was able to see the anemic-looking girl being aided by a nurse robot.

She puffed annoyingly, and then glared at him seriously, calling, “Madonna mia!” She raised her adolescent eyes on him, “It's me — Tanatha!”

Through the blur of his tired vision, for a moment, Narmer couldn't talk; he could only gape through the clear acrylic wall at his wife's perfection. He bent forward his head for a clearer view of her and thought that he wouldn't have recognized her if they'd passed by on the street.

“Lovey — oh my! You passed off before me?” He inquired sarcastically with a weak-gasping voice. “But you're so altered?”

Tanatha let out a silly smirk and nodded a gesture of 'of course I have!'.

“Good Heavens, you caught me off guard—you’ve taken on the body of a child?”

Tanatha’s thoughtful hazel eyes suddenly opened wide and sighed like a Roman woman would, “Oh Madonna!” She pressed her small hand to her face. “I am afraid that I never did mention to you that I was going to have myself enhanced a little.”

“A little?”

“Well, don’t be concerned, I am told that I am still in the developing stage.”

“But—Lovey, it’s just not quite you?”

“Well, *caro uomo*, this is pretty much what I looked like when I was a little girl,” she reluctantly mentioned.

“Rubbish, you don’t resemble any of your childhood images.”

“It’s a slight enhancement,” she blurted out, rubbing her temples as a faraway look came into her eyes. “Well—I suppose.” After a pause, she raised her chin at him, adding, “well *caro uomo*, you won’t quite resemble yourself either after your transformation.” Her retort sounded weak, and she was tired of talking.

“Oh . . .” he said as he couldn’t help but notice her tiredness. “. . . Right-O, Lovey!” He went on with a dismissive chuckle. He then tilted his head at her slender dwarf figure

and, of what he could see of her, he went on to say between a cough, “You're quite a fit bird, aren't you?” He kept looking, appreciating her half-naked seductively curvy body.

“Am I really?”

“Absolutely smashing!” he chuckled again; the chuckle, as it happens many times before, turned to a series of coughs. After a pause, he said, smiling, “I mean you've taken in the footsteps of a charming goddess, haven't you?”

Tanatha nodded, with a grin at his awe-struck earnestness.

“Excuse me, Sir Abraam. Professor Morton is asking for you,” interrupted the escort robot. “Your time, Sir, is of the essence; you must leave now to start your metempsychosis transfer process.”

At the same time, the nurse robot inside the chamber informed Tanatha. “Your Beta and Gamma brain rhythms are unstable. It is essential, Lady Tanatha, that you rest and relax completely.”

Narmer let a breath go and then took his time looking at her before saying, “Charming—I can't believe it is really you!”

“Oh, go on! It is really me—silly.”

As the escort robot led on and the Robo Chair began to move, Narmer turned his head to his wife, whispering, “We're cheeky, aren't we?”

She caved in an approval response with gleaming eyes, saying, “This time, no excuses on not having the time for dancing lessons.”

“Right-O, no excuses. I am glad we’re progressing along, fixing mistakes.” He tilted up his chin, proud, declaring, “You know, time will pass and things will change, but my craziness about you will always remain the same and nothing in this world can change that.” He smiled lovingly, “I’ll see you a bit later, my Lovey.”

Tanatha returned a loving smile, waving her delicate fingers lightly in the air, whispering back, “Arrivederci.” And in the warmth of her hand gesture, her white gold wedding band on her finger caught the light and glittered. Without a question, it was obvious to him that she requested her wedding ring to be transferred to her new body because she wanted their marriage to last as much as he did. Narmer gleamed at her appreciatively. He wrenched away with a touch of pure serenity, grinning softly in silence. He was being more grateful than ever for their marital reconciliation.

Thereafter, inside the metempsychosis transporter room, the escort robot pointed to the Professor, pleasantly saying, “The robot nurses are waiting; we are looking forward to welcoming the new you! Farewell, Sir Abraam!” And then the escort robot exited on its way.

The Robo Chair drifted him toward the metempsychosis machinery, which resembled a futuristic twin-tube MRI chamber. Narmer looked over at it with keen enthusiasm. When he neared closer to the machine, Narmer's left eye twinkled a little as he took a deeper look through the clear tube at his replica synthetic body, which lay naked on the right Tube bed [B], along the left side of Tube bed [A]. The exquisite-looking boy was priceless to him like a donor organ would be. He had, to a limited extent, experienced the replica as an avatar format in the habitat simulator-based training program, which was especially created for Homo sapiens by the new government's biosynthetic administration. However, witnessing his replica in actual reality, equipped with his five senses, was all but a different experience. Right away, Narmer was able to identify the replica as himself, as he once was in his youth, and the thought was remarkable enough to cause him to take a deep breath in awe, which was, nevertheless, more like a gasp than a (woah!). Narmer gave the replica a keen smile, believing in the wondrous possibilities that he would have in such a body. The more excitement over his replica, the more Narmer coughed, until he looked away from the view and ended the excitement with a pleasant sigh.

By now, Narmer was too exhausted, and he felt he was about to lose consciousness. He then took a couple of labored

breaths to steady his nerves, as he approached the Professor on the other side of the MRI chambers, where the operational area was by Tube bed [A].

“Hello Narmer,” the Professor said in salutation, looking up from reading a tablet.

“Morton Benjamin!” Narmer called out to the Professor with a nod of salutation. “This machine contraption is quite magical, isn't it?”

The Professor smiled, “It's as magical as fire itself.” The Professor then chuckled and said, “By the way, these days I only go by the name, Morton.”

“Right-O, we have polished off those bloody surnames,” Narmer said, with a faint smile. Well, do tell me, Morton, it has been some time since your transfiguration. How are you feeling these days?”

“Wonderfully, old friend. I have no side effects whatsoever. I feel powerful! I find my sensation and perception are more enhanced than I ever thought possible — it's a magnificent life!” he said chuckling. “You'll come to know this soon enough.”

Meanwhile, two nurse robots began to get Narmer ready for the transfer. They disrobed him and then lifted him up off the Robo Chair, placing him naked on the metempsychosis transporter scan table (A). The table then gently moved into

the clear tube of the machine. The robots were efficient at ensuring Narmer's safety, and they were able to get through the complicated procedure perfectly.

Through the clear tube, Narmer was able to communicate with the Professor. He gave him a reminiscing smile, saying, "Strange, your ephebic-like face brings back the ghost of the past . . ." Narmer was trying hard to look brave and unconcerned, but by now his Caucasian face had become quite white. He chuckled gently between coughs, trying not to think about death. He went on saying, "What's flashing in my mind is the day at Oxford University, where I met you for the first time, where we almost lost our lives there from the droids' intense laser firing. You know, sometimes I can still smell the burning flesh and hair; the fumes-burning plastic and hemp and molted-metal. Oh, how it stung the back of my throat as I screamed and inhaled . . ." Narmer momentarily became silent when the look of befuddlement flashed across the Professor's face. Besides, he was using up too much of his breath to talk.

The Professor nodded an acknowledgement with a meager smile and said, "Of course, I must have blocked those days out of my head so I can sleep better at night." He then glanced over the tablet and shook his head, indicating a negative. "Narmer — your health records show that this metempsychosis transfer procedure should have been done

around eleven months ago, before your first symptoms of the third stage of lung carcinoma.” The Professor shook his head and shrugged in reluctant surprise, wondering why he had done that.

Narmer nodded, for he was much too tired to explain.

The Professor went on reluctantly with a half-glance towards his face, “I would have never thought of you to be this stubborn! You certainly went out of your way not to comply with medical advice!”

“The reason is all there on record,” said Narmer in shallow whispers.

Looking over the writings on the tablet, the Professor sidelong glanced at Narmer and frowned a bit. “Yes, I see — to preserve the last of your *Homo sapiens* genetic code.” he mumbled as he sat down on a chair, looking over the tablet for the last time. “Surely you are aware that your dwarfism genetic data are on file along with the rest of the final generation of *Homo sapiens*.”

Narmer nodded his head, yes, while his annoying cough persisted. He hesitated for a moment, coughing a bit more before he could talk. “It’s personal and sacred . . . that is why I didn’t comply.”

“Swell, I see . . .” said the Professor, sitting back, reflecting, giving a quick shrug as he rubbed the back of his neck, “. . . I

must say, for a cremated genetic-coded gem keepsake, you've come pretty close to abolishing your life."

Narmer masked his gasp with a chuckle, acknowledging that his situation could have been dire. "It has meaning for me."

Abruptly, one of the nurse robots interrupted, reassuring them that everything is in place, secure, ready to go with the procedure.

"

"Are you ready?" the Professor asked.

Narmer nodded. "Get it done bloody quickly!"

The Professor then got up, walked to the control panel, and touched some keyboard icons on the glass-like screen. "There may be a minor amount of static charge accumulation. You'll first feel some heat and tingling; you'll feel like your nerves are frayed. It is nothing to be concerned about." The Professor said with a promising smile. He then burst into a chuckle at the memory of what he had alleged. "See you at the other side of [B]." Be still now—in a moment, you'll be elated at winning the prize of a new life."

Narmer lay there saying nothing; the fear had suddenly gotten the best of him. He felt every bit as if he was about to skydive through a thunderstorm.

“Engaging system interlock,” the Professor went on, “energizing!”

Narmer felt the pulse flowing through his body. The warmth and tingles went all the way down to his toes, as a strong, intense light shone through him. He felt the static electricity, but no pain, only the numbness all over his body. He started breathing slowly, then sporadic breaths, and then all at once, one long exhalation, and his breathing stopped.



Instantly, a state of unimaginative contentment fell upon Narmer, feeling as though he had physically left his body. At that same moment, the person of being Narmer was no more, but the observer emerged from the ubiquitous sea of consciousness, watching everything around him, which was dark and quiet. Nearby, the well-familiar beam of tunneled light developed into view, which was eternal, and knew everything about the observer: his thoughts, what he did, or will do. In that magical fifth-dimensional space without time, where everything was one, moving with a purpose, the observer turned away from the eternal light source and inquisitively moved into the haze, which appeared below him like a bright, cotton-like cloud

of gas. Inside the cloudy gas, his thoughts suddenly flashed through the major memories of experiences with the other intimate angels.

There, in an angel of light-like form, the observer stepped into time and let its previous corporal life unfold like a hologram 3D projection, from unimaginable worlds to worlds, and then from the tiniest to the greatest life forms on Earth's land, water, and in the sky. Experienced vivid scenes came from one flash scene memory to another flash scene memory, inside and away from the other. "Before long, the observer birthed into humanity and as the memories dissolved into another and another, the observer suddenly stopped over to the day of his first science social gathering where he met an angel of light as a human. The observer then drew near to where he saw himself as a person, experiencing the life of a student in an Oxford blue suit and bow tie. The young man, Narmer Abraam, was loitering by the food table with some of the other exceptional students from other universities. The observer, at that instant, dissolved into that aspect of memory, becoming the memory, and watching himself as a person.

Narmer felt the presence all around the room as he glanced over to the table where his professor, with certain scientist guests of importance, were chatting with the famous astronomer Professor Donato Orticelli, who claims to have

discovered a super-Earth-sized planet orbiting both stars, Alpha Centauri [A] and [B]. The mansion house was filled with guests, professors, and exceptional students of all branches of science who were clustered in large and mixed groups, sipping the bubbly wine and sampling some of the hors d'oeuvres that were being served.

A few moments later, Narmer spotted a server with a glass of what looked like good champagne. He quickly took hold of the glass from the passing server to give himself something to do.

“Please help yourself!” said a young lady's voice with an Italian tinge approaching behind him.

He turned to see the playful voice, and when he did, his eyes gleamed at her beautiful small figure in a burgundy gown.

“Oh my, is this your drink?” He responded, startled.

She giggled for a good moment while studying him from head to toe.

“That's perfectly fine, caro uomo! You're forgiven!”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



*Thank you for your time today. I
am pleased to have you browse around my web
pages.*



*Wishing You Blissful Days
and
Peaceful Nights.*

