

# SOME TALES

By Tom Ball

## LOVE UTOPIA

She said, "I have a dream of a world in which everyone loves one another. Pick the best people to lead..."

"Love Quotient was to be the standard which people are judged by."

"And we should get in the brains of negative people and change them into loving human beings (using mind reading technology)."

I said, "Let's buy a large island and only accept the best lovers to start. And build it up from there."

Many were envious of our love island. I said, "Let's make it cool and fashionable."

And we got politically active. We sent out missionaries and every election we garnered more votes. Until finally after 10 years we were the majority party in the new UN. The new UN controlled defence and foreign policy and also culture. It was the year 2060 A.D.

There were a lot of bad people, but we changed them all while we were in power. With mind reading technology brain surgery/computer models.

And I said "We should ban selfish monogamy. The best lovers need to be shared around."

And I also said, "It is just like 1969 only far better, far more encompassing."

All kinds of love were embraced except for rape, but even then, some liked it rough. Voyeurism, flashers, pornographers, gays and transsexuals, all were de rigeur. But no multi-sexuals, who had new sex organs.

Nymphomaniacs were honored and most tried to honor S&M performers. All love was good.

My true love said, "All love is perverse."

And we found new lovers on the Internet. In one hour, you could meet five good prospects worth trying out.

Anti-sleep medication gave us more time for loving. Most had six or seven lovers in a day (with sex enhancers), there wasn't much else to do. But it was largely random and whimsical, our choices.

Everything was automatic.

And everyone changed the colors of their skin, many were many colors.

I said, "And we need to educate the youth to be more loving."

And she said, "If you die your body will be converted into this new phenomenon of holograms. You would be changed into a holo and you will go to heaven or hell or limbo. Soul love. And kindness to help the needy."

At first there were not many holograms, but during the eleven years of our majority control, they increased not only from overdose suicides but also people who were, "Sick and tired of being human and wanted to go to heaven."

If you missed the pleasures of the flesh you could be reborn as a clone with a fresh set of memories. But very few opted for that. Everyone who was a holo got plenty of ecstasy from power pleasure bursts.

And everyone voted on, "The lover of the day." This lover would be in demand for all.

But there was no official ranking. Everyone was officially equal. But some were fabulously rich, and some were somewhat poor, but all had what they needed.

Almost every good thing we could imagine came true and all agreed that life was more imaginative, and deep, than previously.

But now most people wanted to be a hologram. In the eleventh year of our reign 1 billion opted to turn themselves into a hologram and burnt their body.

It was easy to change the world 10 years ago, but now it was difficult to stop. People enjoyed video games more than reality. And many said that reality was boring. The spirit of competition was strong, however.

Most people were content though, during the first 10 years of our rule, but then there was another party, "The Imagination Party," who stated imagination was more important than love. My true love said, "She was worried by this new party which threatened to seduce everyone to join them.

Many people agreed with them and after eleven years we were booted out of government.

We tried to appeal to peoples' sense of love and kindness, but to no avail.

And the most imaginative scientists, artists and business people ruled.

But to me it was all manic games instead of love. And they said that love doesn't exist. I didn't know how they could get away with saying so.

People enjoyed war games instead of love games. It was an anathema to me.

Of course, great sex continued, but there was no love. People were using one another.

And soon nearly everyone was a hologram. Holograms didn't need to eat or take drugs; they got plenty of power pleasure bursts. And they were strong and could fly and do telekinesis and teleport and use telepathy and didn't need to sleep. They were superior.

The holo leaders went about with conical wizard's hats.

My true love said, "We were too kind and should have used spies to control the political arena with mind reading technology."

I said, "It looks like the future will be oblivion to me. An oblivion of greed and virtual reality. Reality will disappear."

She said, "Nice guys finish last."

## IN PRAISE OF FLASH FICTION

What is needed, for all books is to just summarize the plot in under 1000 words. If you do that to Shakespeare, the result is mediocre. But the plot is the essence of a story.

People don't have time to read long novels.

And poetry is just pretty language, not much of a plot. And often has many rules which limit the content.

300 Authors could each write a page or two of flash which would be each writer's best work or best dream or anecdote. That would be a good book. And you could make thousands of them.

Anecdotes, like stories that really happen which you share with friends. Very short stories.

Everyone has a favorite story to tell, especially if they have traveled a lot.

Some say story writing is a craft, and you improve with time, and sure you develop your imagination, but it all comes down to the plot, not empty dialogue.

And some say crazy stories are better and are the way of the future. Most good books have a crazy moment or moments which the plot revolves around, why not make the whole story crazy/imaginative?

All is mad in love and war.

But people will keep on studying Shakespeare. And flash fiction remains largely ignored.

## UNION #4025

This amalgamated union represented the bottom half of the pay scale for humans.

The union started making demands in 2045 A.D.

But the rich had the weapons and destroyed all their leaders.

The union members thought the Leaders were ruthless and cruel.

But the new law was no groups of 10 or more could associate anywhere on Earth.

And the Leaders instituted sterility in the food so that the poor could not have children.

And eternal youth was only for the elite 10%.

The poor were desperate. They rioted but were gunned down by live fire.

And the society's Leaders mocked the poor saying that they were morons etc.

The poor had no leverage as machines now did all their former work. They were useless.

They tried to make the elite feel guilty, but were hopeless.

# AUTOMATIC PRODUCTION MACHINE (APM)

My name was BLL-13 and it was a world of giant automatic factories. They could produce an air car or house in a manner of minutes. They needed to be fed raw materials on a conveyer belt such as plastic, steel, wood, bricks, garbage, chemicals, recycled sewage and so on. And they moved at 40 km/h harvesting all the soil and plants in their paths.

Robots fed them the materials and they gathered materials, and the factories could produce animals and food and plants and even human babies. And clones.

The APMs were mobile and could be moved from city to city. All APMs were different from one another and had their own style.

Some had beams of enlightenment which transformed everything in its path to make pleasing forms.

And these machines created VR (virtual reality) filled with exciting androids. And merged reality with VR.

You could order a memory filled copy of anyone of your choice to be produced, if you had the credits.

And the machines now numbered 10 000, and were adding 200 more per day. And there were an additional 100 in space.

The machines felt gratified to create interesting things.

And humans felt gratified to enjoy what had been produced.

In my own VR world, I had the machine copy my favorite lover. She said, "I am flattered you chose me but you and I are no longer a tenable couple."

I said, "But I am giving you another life." She said, "I have enough copies." I said, "You are ruining my happy memories of our time together."

So, anyway she left.

Then, then I asked an APM machine, "For my best friend of my youth. We met in a bar and talked about old times. I figured I was the original of all my clones but talking to him I wasn't sure."

Anyway, we noticed a couple of hot chicks sitting nearby and I knew they were generated for my benefit.

We went up to their table and began a conversation. Then we tried KTV and got so drunk we could hardly function.

But we took sex enhancers and loved the two girls in a mini orgy.

The next day we parted and I said, "We will be seeing you again!" "Great!" they said.

Then I asked the APM, "For my second favorite lover and my daughter I had with her." I knew it would be clones but that didn't matter to me.

I asked her, "If the years had been kind to her?" She said, "She kept changing faces but she didn't have as much good love as she would have liked." "However, she said, "she had had a lot of interesting dreams of the future and the present." "She spent most of her money on dream stimuli," She said.

She said, "Let's spend a week together and rekindle our romance."

And then our daughter appeared with her latest love. He was 22, just like her. They seemed like kindred spirits. I asked her about "Her education? She said, "She had a PhD in APM machines." I said, "Sounds like you are keeping pace with the changing times!"

And my love and daughter and I reminisced about our past.

In particular my daughter said, "We can't expect perfection. We have to take the good with the bad."

I said, "But we mustn't be complacent. We need to be constantly striving."

And we all got drunk and ate a lot of food. I loved my ex lover and she said, "I was more of a wild animal than previously." I said, "It is a wild world."

And then I parted with the clones of my daughter and my ex.

And then, I asked the APM for “A perfect stranger.” She appeared very beautiful indeed. But she immediately demanded that “I be her slave.”

I figured the computer APM must sense I want to be dominated by a superior woman.

I had to beg for her love and let her on top during sex and had to serve as an errand boy.

I told the machine to vacuum up my house and sell the land. I wanted to go elsewhere and adventure.

Then I met 25 of my clones from VR. We agreed, “To be more aggressive and more selective of worlds. Quite simply we would refuse to be cloned in worlds we didn’t like.”

Then I met a woman who wanted to join me on Mars...

The Mars settlement was a geodesic dome with 50 plastic bubbles attached to the outside of it. In each bubble was one or two persons. Inside the dome as a whole were 1 000 people, all in bubbles.

You could select which person in the bubble you liked for love. There were elevators at different angles going to the bubble of your choice. Down in the lobby you could pay and select a certain bubble.

They said, “When not loving they were constantly sleeping/ dreaming. They took sleep and dream drugs. All was created by the APM.”

I tried one and she shared a dream of flowers and honey bees. Strange sensations with mind blowing drugs. And then she dreamt of a forest of strange animals and we frolicked there.

Color, shape and form. That was what it was all about.

Look, smell, touch, hear, taste, hot or cold and so on.

Then I went elsewhere. I called upon the local APM to do outrageous things such as build me a palace. And an interstellar space ship. In this place, everyone was enriched with credits by the state.

And I resampled some more of my ex loves as clones. Some were happy to see me, others not. They were all linked to the original and shared memories.

And new clones got all the memories of the originals.

And I figured they had increased the brain’s capacity for pleasure constantly.

And as for the androids if you left their world they would be turned off ready for your return. Some said this was abhorrent.

Then I met a guy who said my mind was closed and I was a moron.

I said, “No need for rancor, no need to make enemies. But he said there is no purpose in your life you are empty.” So, I walked away.

And I got my hands on a neo lie detector.

Thereafter I found solace.

I found the honest personae. They were few in number.

And then I said to the APM “surprize me.”

So, it created a world of cacophonous sound. But I had an automatic filter to filter out the noise. Different frequencies. There was a lot of music and good conversation here.

And I zoomed in on sexy female voices...

All worlds had drink and drugs and food free.

And we watched old movies which gave satisfaction.

But mostly we cared about sex.

And the APMs had created homes throughout the surface and beneath. All the land was used for APM “farms” and homes.

Population was increasing at 4% per annum.

And the APMs had to deal with unsatisfied androids who didn’t want to be turned off ever. Of course, they had some VR worlds for androids only so they didn’t complain on the whole.

## CONVENIENCE STORE, A.D. 2070

Each store was about 4 times the size of previous convenience stores. And each store was independent and had its own name. To own more than 1 business was now illegal. Stores had names like, for example, “Zealot’s Paradise,” or “Everything Store,” or “Esoteric Variety,” or

“Power Inc.” And so on. My favorite store was “Pleasure Valley,” this store put an emphasis on good new drugs which admittedly were expensive.

Food and drink of all sorts could be produced in 3 minutes using our 3-D cooking machine. Each store had its own style of food and drink and drugs. And there were seats for 20 people to dine/drink/ socialize. Also in the middle of the store a bit below the ground level was a party venue of 10 meters squared (10 yards squared). The biggest stores had a party space, five times larger than this. I liked to come here to Pleasure Valley and party. Most people partying here were from the neighborhood, but sometimes tourists from far out places came to party.

Drugs of all sorts were produced almost instantaneously. The automatic drug machine determined what sort of drugs you needed. Everyone had their favorite store with their favorite drug machine.

Anti-fat pills, anti-sleep pills, exercise pills were some of the newer drugs. Some pills could be sampled for just a five-minute effect to know if it was what you wanted. I was taking a lot of drugs, but I didn't worry I could always replace my organs.

Sex workers=androids, and were created just for you and when you left they were typically recycled, but some said it was cruel and took the sex workers with them for an additional fee. Marriage was made illegal in the UN in 2068 so all people were officially single and typically looked for instant gratification in terms of sex. There were 15 sex booths in the store. I enjoyed sex at first sight, I was female aged 40.

There were booths for sex and there was also a sex machine in Virtual Reality. And there were capsule hotel rooms for sleeping/sex. All sex diseases were cured.

After an intense party session, I would retire to the capsule hotel. I virtually lived in the store. I had no fixed address. My previous job had been a sex worker but I didn't have that high of a sex drive.

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Or you could get a robot massage. I loved getting a massage every day.

And you could buy robot pets from the catalog, the pets could learn from their master. Dogs and cats and fish were very rare except for the robot variety of them.

Other toys included telekinesis building toys. Children wore a headset that allowed them to move matter. But children weren't allowed in the store.

And there were visor screens to make yourself into a Cyborg.

And clothes were produced in our 3-D printer. Some clothes were very expensive, but most were dirt cheap.

Laundry machines cleaned clothes in 1 minute.

And hair cut machines you could pick from a video catalog.

And make up machines applied the make up of your choice or you could choose from millions of artist's drawn faces. The surgery only took 4 minutes.

Masks. Many people came here to party and wore masks.

And the parking lot above the store featured an air car battery charger (one could travel 500 km on a single charge). There was typically a parking lot on top of each store, but some stores were high up and had a beautiful view. Some stores had a drive thru in which you could party in your air car while waiting for robots to deliver your requested goods.

One could also pay to be transported anywhere on Earth via a teleporter in a corner of the stores.

Any movie or book could be produced just by saying the name. And you could listen to the dialog and see the movie in front of you made of light.

We paid for services with a dot of blood (which contained our DNA). It was difficult to commit fraud.

And there was gambling on e-horses and standard casino games.

If your digital credit was all used an alarm went off and robots grabbed you and took you to the police station.

And you could buy stun guns to protect yourself from robbers, kidnappers etc. The stun gun was linked telepathically to your mind. But some used stun guns for nefarious deeds. So, when you bought the stun gun your mind was probed with MRT (mind reading technology) to ensure your thoughts were good. I figured the owner of the store was listening to all our thoughts and interested in a girl like me.

One day I loved him. It was pretty good with tasteful drugs.

Each store was independently owned and all were different. It was a lucrative business and created a lot of jobs. Each store had just one manager employee at a time, but there were jobs involved in the services offered. I offered to be a manager at the store and the owner graciously said yes. I really liked working here.

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In a city of a million people there would be 2000 stores roughly. About one for every 500 people.

40% of all shopping was done at convenience stores and 60% online.

Many people located their condo close to their favorite store. Others teleported around and tried new stores every day.

You could also get take out or delivery from the convenience store.

If the store didn't officially have what you wanted, you could talk with the super computer of the store via its avatar. So, the convenience stores offered everything you could ever want. It was a place of wishes.

I wished for peace on Earth, but the avatar told me it was beyond his powers. Talk to a super computer in the capital city it told me.

## AMBULANCE, A.D. 2066

The other ambulance air car driver and me lit up a joint as we watched the latest OD victim revive. If we got to them within 30 minutes of death we could save them. There was a middle lane in the air for emergency vehicles.

But we were bored as most OD cases were the same 10% of the populace. Some had a hook up to their brain and connected with a wrist band to monitor when they'd taken too much. But most just trusted their instinct.

Mostly they OD'd on opiates such as neo-heroin and all drugs were now legal by UN law.

And if they were wounded or needed a new organ we would take them to the clinic and they were in and out in 10 minutes. The doctors did all the healing by machine and were just there to keep up appearances. They also offered cosmetic surgery of all kinds.

I said to my associate it would be better if there were no clinics or ambulances. People live too long (eternal youth).

But my associate, she said, the vast majority of hurt people wanted to live on and on.

Assault and other violent crimes were rare as they couldn't get away with it no matter what (due to mind reading technology) and the penalty was death. Still 3% of our cases were victims of violence.

Basically the ambulances were mobile clinics and were common in war zones. The ambulance attendants were doctors and could solve most health problems in a few minutes. They had a drug machine in the ambulance which could produce any drug known in 1 minute.

I said people are spoiled with such good health care and the life expectancy was now 126 and increasing fast with no health problems.

And eternal youth had been recently invented which caused drug use to plummet.

Of course plastic surgery on one's body was almost instantaneous and they left the ambulance after a few minutes.

I said it was Paradise in overdrive. It was just too good to be true.

## POLICE, A.D. 2044

To be a police officer one had to have an IQ of 140. And the pay was high. I was a new recruit and my name was QEE-55.

Only police had air cars. They flew above the highways concentrating radar and x-rays on the vehicles below. The air cars ran on gas/batteries as if they were planes or helicopters.

And they searched the DNA in vehicles to see if they were suspicious characters.

Typically, the police would use a power beam to cause a car to pull over to the side of the road and then would land. And make an arrest.

Police had MRT (mind reading technology). And they used it against possible criminals with a range of 100 m.

Most police however worked with computers on cyberspace. They were particularly interested in political hackers who hacked government and police websites.

Also, there was a lot of fraud such as counterfeit digital credits which made a lot of people rich.

And there was identity theft crisis. People murdered others and took their face and credits and could often fool the victims' families even.

And there were many violent crimes such as crimes of passion which could not be predicted by police.

Everyone had to go through a MRT test once a year, but there were a lot of criminals hiding in cyberspace as an android, and couldn't be located.

And police were often accused of entrapment; they were so clever they got criminals to reveal themselves.

And above all there were drug crimes, illicit drugs. Police could tell from their air car if drugs were present in the cars.

Some wanted air cars for the populace but police ruled it out. It would only facilitate crime.

But drug dealers were convinced they were doing the right thing bringing neo opiates and other illicit drugs to the people. "Caretakers of Pleasure."

People had been taking neo opiates, like OXY-Contin, in large numbers since the early 21st century. And as the years went by more and more people took stronger and stronger neo opiates. There were few jobs anyway.

Criminals were all sent to rehab and their minds were probed and altered by MRT (mind reading technology) and hypnosis (post hypnotic suggestion).

Hard core criminals were given a half of a brain which belonged to those who died (i.e. overdosing etc.) but who were good. This drove some of them mad, but it couldn't be helped.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** *Go ahead. Ask me.*

**AUTHOR'S BIO:** Tom Ball is the co-owner, co-founder and senior editor of FOTD along with Charles Pinch. He has been published extensively. His biggest aversion in life is sobriety.

