

*Ade Ronke*  
*The Revirna Elevation*

*edewlogics*

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## PART I

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A series in nirvana catches its wrecks ablaze and unfounded, and the silent ambience resonates from its precursor a debased quietus replacing life, omitting it. The lantern fly, bright and pompous reserves its seat as the elusive light corners a thought pieces strong, pieces lost. And the Human Element, Ee, dissolves, burrowing into non-space requiring time, the dying maps of a dying breed.

It was the perfected specimen for evolutionary ambitions, and its history had been short and highly celebrated: discover, disrupt, string and cap the Elusive element. The celebration lasted, until the Human Element, HE, rejected the cap, and the uncapping became infectious.

Seated in the observation room, Dr. Biola Moore felt the pinch on her arm more disturbingly than she ever did, her anticipation mounting with trepidation. The man doing the nervous pinching, Nathan, her understudy, breathed heavily beside her, also with trepidation. Without any medical degree to speak of, he was the best help she could find under the circumstances. And the circumstances were dire. It was their much unpredictable last chance. It was humanity's last as well.

The Creature was rousing toward wakefulness. And the room was edgy with anticipation. Alongside Nathan, Alan, and Dick, they were the last four known of their kind medically equipped for survival, and they had overdosed her with the Ee antidote that morning to ensure her survival in case of exposure. They had cured the antidote for two years, edging between optimum survival mode and

the vacuous sensation of Ee to have the particular day.

Human survival outside those she had medically equipped with the cured antidote was highly unlikely, if not impossible. But there was the Creature, the one for whom they had suffered most, the human they had experimented on, and the last of her hopes that the Human Element is salvageable from the reins of the Elusive element.

He roused slowly but surely with the initial minor movements of his fingers maturing towards limb sensations.

They waited.

"The best and worst expectation?" Nathan asked.

Tall and Lanky with complimentary good looks, he was the handsomest of the trio. He was also the smartest.

"A biparasitic creature on one hand, a human in the making on the other," Biola replied.

"Any symbiosis in the biparasitic at all?" Nathan asked.

She exhaled. "Yes. Parasitic symbiosis is possible, a situation in which neither parasite is the host. This may cave into an evolutionary need. A corruption of one, the HE, by the hopefully-non-dominant other, the Ee, becomes an emerging need for both to survive for some eventual sense of domination by one over the other. The question we need to ask and find out is who or what is the host in the Creature. That could either save our lives or kill us all. So, it's very important."

"Who is dominant? Who is recessive?" Nathan asked quietly to himself.

There was the reminder that the Creature was going to take its time coming into the consciousness they had hoped for or come into some consciousness they hadn't hoped for. And their fears had mounted. The observation room gained an awful resounding silence in the moment.

HE, after all, had not been elusive to any of them in his human state. He roused them more than any experimental subject ever could, more than losing the Human Element. He was their best hope mainly because he was her colleague, a physician, the one who developed the Ee inhibitors from which she had discovered HEP, Human Element Prohibitors enabling the Ee.

Having been subject to persistent transient states for the last two years, and coupled with the fact that Nathan had shaved him for the appearance they expected, he was very much the man she had admired both professionally and romantically. He was younger looking due to the age-defying effects of the Human Element Assistance, HEA, the regenerative enzyme she had developed to work alongside the inadequately efficient Ee inhibitors against the HEP. It was the wonder cure she hoped delivered the promises of long-term effects and sustenance for the Human Element. The derivative towards the ultimate cure was nothing easy.

"This is way earlier than we thought," Dick, the one duly in charge of security, complained behind her.

Tall and muscular, he was the most manly, savage and most militant of the trio, having been fully trained as a military personnel. There was none she feared more, none she depended on for safety more.

"We worked very hard for this. It was expected," Biola replied.

Dick shook his head. "You said it may take another few weeks to raise him."

Biola turned to face Dick. "I'm not perfect Dick. Besides, there is no such thing as scientific perfection in these end-of-days practices we have here. All biological signs show he is rousing, now, and not in a few weeks as I had predicted. I—"

"And you don't think that is eerily erroneous Dr. Moore?" Dick asked.

Biola hesitated briefly, reconsidering her statement before deciding she must be honest with her crew. They were few and, unlike her, had been forced into whatever medical responsibilities there were rather than trained for it. She lowered her tone significantly to hide her frustrations as she responded.

"Regardless of my wrongdoing with regards to the timing for full maturation, he is rousing now. Whatever we do now is of the relevant question."

Dick frowned. "You may be asking the wrong questions, Dr. Moore. What if these things, everything we have done so far, all the atrocities we committed just to keep this Creature alive was all for naught? If the time for reawakening is wrong... What if I am forced to have to kill him?"



Biola's vulnerable heart weakened, as if it was going to break at the thought of the unimaginable predicament. The expectation of forever could turn into a moment. They could not be faffing around with forever if forever was already a faff. But if forever was already a faff, could they have the moment? If they did not have the moment, the boys could open fire and the moment, her moment, her last, their moment, their last, could be lost forever? What was she to fear more? Her tone was accusatory when she spoke. "He's barely alive and you're already thinking of killing him?"

Dick narrowed his eyes. "If you think I will murder him in cold blood you're sadly mistaken Dr. Moore. The last report of him I read said he was some cold blooded Creature, one of them, the diseased outsiders out there, and the next thing I knew he was lab meat, your lab meat."

Dick's unsuccessful attempt to quench Biola's fears became apparent. She was trying without much success to stop herself from cringing in fear for the preservation of the Creature's life.

He was more worried about the cost of the possible preservation of that yet doubtful existential life, the one that was once a successful doctor. "I don't intend to murder him," he reassured her.

Why didn't she believe him? Biola took a few steps to stand close to Dick.

Dick held her eyes fully.

"Do you know why I appointed you head of security Dick?" Biola asked.

Dick shrugged. "I'm not sure. Could it be because of my good looks, gigantic muscles and military background?"

She smiled, sarcastically.

He continued. "Could it be that you love my human propensity and natural inclination to deliver much necessary violence or my distinct instinctual ability to smell disaster?"

Biola shook her head. "No. It was because I could always read into your often weak and ineffectual ability to deliver a lie."

Dick couldn't evade her accusatory stare. "I don't intend to murder him in cold blood. Dr. Moore," he muttered.

She narrowed her eyes. "Are you sure about that?"

Dick reconsidered briefly, studying her, exhaled, and moved his face closer to hers hauntingly. "It all depends, doesn't it? Do you think it has predestined cognition like the others before it? Can he envisage a possible path of reaction and counteractions as HEP III when they're about to die? If he does, is the predestinate cognition amplified or inhibited by the cure? Should I kill him just because he can preempt my propensity for necessary violence better than you, probably smarter than you, quicker than you? Will he kill me before we get the chance to find him out?"

Biola closed her eyes slowly, drenched with worry. She felt like screaming out loudly but clenched her fists nervously instead, weighing the possibility of some hierarchy on the value of life, that of the nature of a normal human she knew as Dick against that of the normalized human they named the Creature.

Dick studied her. "Is that you being able to predict my ineffective lies or is it my weak truth you predict at the moment?"

She hesitated briefly, thinking. "Neither ineffective lies nor weak truth matter if we don't consider the worth of the subject matter. There is value in the predestinate cognition and biopsychological framework but there is more value on the post-destinate worth here."

Dick exhaled, silenced briefly by her statement and the muted fact that it hurt to imagine there was more worth embedded in an unknown mutation of humanity with equal possibility of being both the peril and the savior of the race. He spoke softly but coldly to minimize the emotional angst plaguing him in the moment. "What is the predestinate cognitive worth of a human life?"

She hesitated, engaging his eyes not to appear disengaged from facts of the moment. "It is important that we consider efficiency and usefulness in ensuring the survival of our species."

Dick frowned, narrowed his eyes. "Anything for our species Dr. Moore. So, what is the predestined cognitive worth of our species as we are right now?"

Biola tried preventing her nervousness from manifesting in her tone as she spoke. "What are you really asking me Dick?"

Dick moved closer to her and spoke in a deliberately slow haunting tone. "The very same question you asked me earlier, only mine is in the much necessary other direction. Do you feel the same way I feel, Dr. Moore? Do you value human life over some unpredictably quasi-manageable resuscitated Creature's?"

"He's our only hope," she reassured him.

He narrowed his eyes. "Are you sure about that?"

She hesitated briefly at the insinuation behind his words. "May I remind you that I am the only medical professional here?"

Dick smiled, sarcastically, maintaining the haunting tone. "That can't possibly mean none of us is smart enough to figure a better alternative for our future than the rearing of a creature?"

She shook her head at the thought Dick could be in charge of all operations including hers. And life seemed a moment's perfect ignorance to a mind like hers, a laughable turn of event to a mind like his. What laughable turn of events could be brewing between his laughable ears?

"What could be a better alternative Dick?" she asked, restraining the faint emotionality to her tone. "That I spread my legs and let you three take turns getting between them?"

Dick shrugged. "It will be what will be most welcomed. Don't forget the Creature. If he survives this, he will want his turn at it. He's yet a full blooded man-creature isn't he Dr. Moore?"

Biola shook her head, pained inside, while holding onto the pre-established atmosphere of control, one she knew she could lose any moment. She spoke in a low controlled tone. "I'm afraid your little hail day survivor plan is not scientifically viable Dick."

Dick held a mocking smile. "Is that so? Or are you beginning to entertain the possibility of turning into those monsters without an infection."

She shrugged the neutral mode of the moment. "Don't be silly Dick. Human males were monsters from the beginning of all things. The virus acts on preexisting conditions or it has nothing to work on."

Dick studied her. "Such, the probability of such an event is to be expected not just in males but females as well. What costly life lessons we've learned."

She shrugged. "Who is to say there isn't a counter-reactionary action in place for such expectation."

He hadn't expected such an answer despite his knowledge of her ability to solve problems. He engaged her eyes fully. "You would rather kill us than fulfill the necessary purpose of progeny?"

She drew her head back at the thought of his insinuation. "Sounds more like rape than a purposeful act Dick. Besides, don't misunderstand my words... such an act may be sexually fulfilling

for you but it cannot go beyond that in usefulness. The real aim for it in our current condition would be its possible functionality. It is not enviable at all but rather functionally unviable. Whatever progeny results from such purposeless show of sexual prowess will not just be a carrier of both Ee and HEP but a much vulnerable carrier. If it does not die in the womb, it can hardly survive life postnatal. The offspring might currently be dormant in us but is dominant with copulation, and here a female will be more potent. Such progeny of any kind is a catastrophe for us all. The preservation of the Creature's life is the most valuable thing we have at the moment. "

"We risk it. That's what humans do," Dick replied.

Biola squinted, studying the level of his seriousness in the matter. What was the reasoning behind the poor quality of the pretentious act at the sudden change of heart on the issue? Was it some mutiny in the making she was oblivious to? Her fears were of duplicitous nature. Who was she to fear more? The creature she bred and brought to life or the humans she currently depended on to keep her safe and sane? "But whatever offspring we sire from such unholy union cannot be called human either. And if I am impregnated with a full blown fetus which may happen from the relation of two carriers, there is a very high probability I will die alongside the fetus."

Dick shrugged. "What's the harm in having fun?"

"Must it be absolute insanity for me and

absolute death for all?" Biola asked in response.

Nathan spoke. "Isn't absolute life a better prediction for our survival Dr. Moore?"

She knew it. Nathan had interrupted intentionally, from the apparent need to relieve her of the tense conversation. He knew the boys more than she did, knew when the etiquette of control may turn into that of savagery, knew she was more than her open legs aside from her achievements. He was yet to be corrupted and she was glad for it. His somewhat unforeseeable corruption, on any level within human capacity, will be her undoing.

She exhaled, holding on to her glaring newly energized stance against Dick, and resisting the urge to turn around to face Nathan, she spoke. "Unlike the biparasitic survival mode the Creature is prone to go into, there is no co-evolution possible between the progeny and me. You will have no choice but to spread each other's legs and hope for the best. Alongside the uncured child, I'll be dead."

It was alarming they were still debating her choices on their survival when she was the only person qualified to give such. She, after all, never debated Dick on safety and missions. Neither did the others.

Alan, the bad tempered bald man of medium height entered the room. He was also the most reserved of them, which, in her opinion, made him unpredictably more dangerous than Dick. He stared from one occupant of the room to the next before engaging Biola's eyes.

Biola began to grasp the full implication of what was occurring. Why was she the only person not scared of the Creature's becoming, of its rousing, and rising?

She engaged his eyes wondering if he would express such fears. "Do you have any questions Alan?"

He hesitated briefly, assuring her the trio must have had a discussion of such fears without her presence. "Just in case something goes wrong with the Creature's survival, Dr. Moore, do we truly have no other alternative?"

She exhaled, turned slightly to hold Alan's eyes fully behind Dick's, grateful for the moment of ease between her and the boys. "I will need to produce sustainable coeval origination and migration."

Dick frowned. "What the hell does that mean?"

"I will need a pro-cured healthy human cell to clone. And we do not have the specimen, the machinery, or the facility for that now, do we?" she replied.

Silence fell in the observation room as they heard the Creature moan, uttering something incomprehensible, yet lively.

They all stared at the Creature from the observation room.

"He's our only hope," she reassured them.



Dick turned his head to hold Nathan's eyes behind hers as some solemn silent contract. If anything went more than usually wrong, Nathan gets the blame. He took his seat silently.

They waited. And watched.

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If the Bentonite could scream its dreams in ashes, it would never make it to the fire; its heat will have no life but that which perishes it. It dreams first of fire and its dreams of fire come with its peril in tow. The Creature was envisioned not from some chaos deep within, but from a deliberate thinking mind in search of calm, never to quench fire but to deliver life. He roused her to the brink of fear and excitement all the same, the embryogenesis bound to deliver itself or perish all life.

It moved again, this time with a semblance of consciousness, turning to gain some yet uncertain level of comfort. And she moved with him then, making a slight jump upward as though her heart would jump out of its cavity.

She thought about the complex naturalization and denaturalization that allowed the Creature to exist, the atrocities she had consented to without anyone's dissent or consent, the paradox she had enabled. It was done to save a semblance of humanity hanging treacherously on its last leg, she rationalized. It was for the primitive reloading of essential existence that

was becoming elusive. She had sought to save humanity when all hope possible in its pure form was degeneration, and all there was left was the variation of degeneration.

Dick stood and got out of the observation room.

And Biola breathed a discomfoting sigh of relief. Was he to wish her miracle away? Was it something other?

The Creature roused slowly and she waited patiently, watching diligently. The turn of his face upwards, towards the ceiling was the momentary awareness that jolted her off her feet. He was conscious!

As if he sensed her proximity to him as she neared the observation glass, he raised his back.

She rushed backward to take her seat in an attempt to avoid the inexplicable intrusion upon her senses, the jolt in her nerve endings enveloping, overwhelming her, alarming her to vulnerability, to sensualities, to possibilities. She didn't want her colleagues to notice her weakness as she felt her sense of privacy receding despite the presence of a barrier. He roused her than any of the men ever could, and he had barely made an attempt.

He took to a seated position next, dragging his legs off the bed without any sign of strain to his effort.

Her heart was beating faster than she could control, the scene before her within her awareness, beyond her reach. He was awake and alert!

Nathan walked over to stand behind her chair. He took to pinching her arm to calm her.

She noticed Alan's absence briefly before Dick entered the observation room carrying a bag of ammunition, guns, rifles, grenades, and the much-preferred sedative she recommended.

She held her breath.

The Creature stood slowly, walked some distance towards them and peered into the sturdy glass encasement barricading him from them. He paced, peered, and appeared deliberative.

"Signs of determinate behavior, procedural thought processing, and no sign of violent tendencies," Nathan commented.

Silence presided in the room.

She didn't want to appear overly pleased. "No sign of violent tendencies maybe, at least, non observable yet. We should be careful Nathan."

The Creature stopped as she spoke, his piercing gaze gripping hers, gripping every essential nerve she possessed. It was as if he could see her, read her, and read into her soul. Could he do it? He radiated acknowledgement of her, a subtle intangible reach for her. She was the only presence that mattered in the room, the only presence in the room, the only other entity he wished to reckon with, for his conscious awareness.

He moved forward to touch his body to the glass enclosure, and holding on steadily to her eyes called,

"Biola!"

She froze, and Nathan's hold on her arm stilled before sliding to a drop. The sensation that enveloped her was intrusive and intense. And she stared straight at the Creature, at the strangeness of the reawakening, the lucidity she told others to expect submerged her.

She realized then, the side effect of the reawakening she had not paid attention to during her administration of the procedure. He was prone to take the lead position she had with the men at the moment. And she feared that the possibility could destroy the real world order she had worked hard to maintain while he was asleep.

While they had their eyes on him, he hardly relinquished his hold on hers.

She held his eyes steadily. "He's onto us. He knows we are here. He knows I am here. Sensitivity is the side effect of HEP suppression." But she stopped short of speaking the truth. The Creature seemed rather hypersensitive to HEP suppression. He seemed hypersensitive to everything.

Nathan was less trusting of the Creature's instincts. "He may be onto you. He's more onto us than you," Nathan commented.

Dick cocked his gun, turned to hold her eyes as she held his. "Predestinate Cognition is already apparent, don't you think Dr. Moore?"

She held her breath. There was no way she was

going to allow them to murder him in cold blood, just so she can become some useless slut they keep around for their sexual pleasures. She would rather die to prevent the horrid fate.

He called her name with more passion to his tone this time. And none in the room could mistake the tone of humanity accompanying the call. The Creature yearned for company, hers! And maybe those of others; giving off a hint of the certain human trait rather than some residual!

They all stared at the Creature.

"We have to go in," Biola said.

Alan frowned. "I don't think that's a good idea. What if he's not better? What if that is not him at all? What if this Creature is faking it?"

Biola exhaled, glanced towards the Creature, reassured of her weakness to meet him, to experience him. "He couldn't be faking anything now. He doesn't know who he is yet, human or them."

Alan deepened his frown. "What if he's not better?"

She exhaled. "Something gets better or worse by the measure of the value you place on it."

"What do you mean by that Biola?" they heard the Creature ask through the intercom.

"He can hear us," Biola acknowledged. And they were silent briefly.

"I'll blast him back to sleep if he's not better. Dr. Moore can bother about resurrecting him

afterwards,” Dick told the Creature, holding its eyes behind the glass barricade.

Biola exhaled, reconsidering the situation briefly. "We go in...we go in protected."

"He can hear that as well," Alan complained.

Nathan stayed on point. "Risk analysis Dr .Moore?"

Dick stood, readying his gun. "His Postdestinate Cognition gives the impression of hyperactivity, his senses seem overactive."

“Are you just saying that to give a better excuse for going on fully armed, making stuff up?” Biola asked.

Dick shook his head. “No. His Predestinate Cognition seems supranormal.”

"Dear Universe Dick, so are his chances of humanity," Biola admitted. "If you're trigger happy we lose everything we worked for in the last two years. If we do not go in, our fates as Ee carriers are not good. Whether he is better or worse our best consequent value is in going in."

"We go in protected," Nathan said in support of her plan. "Dick can pack the gun, and everyone else goes in with the ENO sedate. Anyone of us can take him down. Or we do so simultaneously. If he dies by over-sedation, it's the risk we take."

"I'm packing a gun too," Alan said. "I don't trust that Creature at all, sorry Dr. Moore."

She shuddered at the thought of failure, covering her face in expression of her frustrations. "Okay, but if

you kill him before I get a chance to save the possible humanity in him, I swear I will kill myself way before you boys can take turns at me. And I need you to promise you won't hurt him unnecessarily."

Alan and Nathan mumbled promises she was smart not to accept at face value.

She moved closer to the observation glass and there, locked eyes with the Creature.

He called her name again, in a soft deliberate whisper and she was almost certain only she could hear it.

She spoke softly, deliberately, certain yet that only he could hear it. "Can you stand all the way back Dr. Morris?"

The test in self-recognition was instant. The Creature moved backward and without turning his back on them, sat on the bed.

She exhaled, glad of his self-recognition and obedience. And it felt like a walk on the moon as she walked back to consort with the rest of her crew. They argued about Dick going in first, going in armed. Biola argued against the move, and was certain Dick could make the mistake of killing the Creature on sight.

Reaching the consensus Dick was too quick to trigger and could be the worse risk, Alan went in first, armed.

They followed cautiously, all equipped with the ENO sedate, Dick, the last to come in, was also armed, a decision made against the consensus. They hoarded

themselves farthest from the Creature, their backs to the observation glass.

Holding Biola's hand and pulling her forward slowly, Alan kept her beside him as she spoke. "How do you feel?"

Tall, handsome, intelligent and efficient, Dylan Morris seemed the emblem of perfection professionally and socially. He exhaled and his expression softened at the full sight of her. "Fine," He replied in a calm reassuring tone, and stared towards Alan's gun before tracing his eyes along Dick's gun. "Why?" he asked earnestly.

The room was silent briefly.

With his long and steady gaze on Dick behind her, in an instant, she made a quick realization and turned. "You didn't!"

Dick shrugged, holding the semi-automatic rifle pointed straight at Dylan. "Better safe than sorry."

She turned to face Dylan again

"Do you remember the fate of our world at some or any moment?" Biola asked.

Dylan exhaled. "Yes."

Biola exhaled as the hints of humanity in him reassured her marginal belief slightly that the cure had worked. "I must inform you of the things you missed while sleeping."

Gesturing, she ushered the rest of the crew into a corner.



They obliged reluctantly. All three were equipped with guns, as Nathan took the corner, and all three guns were pointed at the Creature.

She paced against the wall of the observation room briefly before briefing him on the events of the years he was not himself or anyone else.

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A mark must to a fleeting rippling specter correspond as well as disdain, a point to a potent reference as well as regard.

She woke too early, with a sense of apprehension and lounging, looking forward to a day more exciting to her than the last two years of work and loneliness. Ensuring his life and revival had kept her alive beyond the hope for humanity she clung to. She had been irrevocably attracted to him before the invasion, had nursed his disease as she nursed him, had developed a cure to spare his life. When all was said and done, with the success of the revival through the Revirna Elevation project, she was intensely in love with the man he was and what he could become.

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At dawn, she dared entry into the observation room alone, aching to have his company to herself before the men intruded. There, she got on her knees beside his bed and watched him sleep for a few seconds before the proclivity of his proximal sensitivity to

presence roused him to wakefulness.

He held her eyes in that position, rousing her unexpectedly, firmly, and locking gaze with her as he stood slowly to tower over her.

He stood in the full glory of his nakedness.

And took her breath for an instant.

He stared down at her, grinning. "You wanted to see the view?"

She took in the view again, closing her eyes slowly to attain a semblance of inner strength against the rush of nerve endings to the opening between her legs. She stood to gain eye-level with him. "I created it."

He smiled. "I need a shower."

She smiled. "Is that an invitation or a need to feel clean?"

He narrowed his eyes as he widened his smile. "Must it be either in particular?"

She was in some elevated mode, one quite reminiscent of the symptomatic effect of the Revirna Elevation landscape. Her hands graced his hands intentionally and she slowly drew him towards the door.

"Where are we going?" he asked, unsure about the reason for her excitement.

He followed. They rushed between the closed out spaces demarcated with plastic covers and crossed

out wooden structures, until they got to the pool.

She took her clothes off slowly, deliberately, engaging his eyes. He smiled at the sight of her, the full attention to the details of her form arousing him to the maximum extent.

She got in the waters to the rush of the soothing coldness, urged him into the same with the curl of her fingers.

He obliged, rushing into the watery expansion.

She flinched as he flinched, his lean muscles contracting without release as he got to her. The sparkle of humanity she had recognized only slightly earlier was gone. And her heart began to beat faster.

His hands closed in on her curves, gripping her with the same unpredictable level of strength she had expected from his transformation.

He took her out of the pool as easily as he got in it.

It was her chance to get away from the unpredictability of his sudden changed demeanor. She crawled with hands and knees on the ground to get away from him to a stand.

He brought her down in one quick powerful leap. And in the tonality of the vocal expression of her dissent, she voiced a plea. "No."

It was inevitable.

She had imagined things differently, imagined romance, envisioned some prepackaged unpredictable estimation of intellectual pleasure

thrusting the emotional towards the sexual, culminating towards an eventual inestimable intercourse. Instead, she was ravaged by a recognizable tamed savage.

## PART II

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In conflict, there is the silent ovation loud in its resignation. There is the oration never fully and favorably understood—that the observance of silence in the face of ridicule may be the silent elusive descent into cataclysm.

She delayed the discussion on the incident until the boys could read the warmth between them, somewhat reimagining the possibility he couldn't be human again, couldn't be the great physician they knew.

She sat down and faced him.

He exhaled. "I came into the full realization of what could be happening while the pleasure culminated."

She closed her eyes slowly, opened them to weaken under his gaze. The glint of humanity was back in his eyes. "Well, quite the pleasure principle excuse, won't you say?"

He shook his head, holding her gaze steadily. "Don't patronize me Biola, you know I am intelligent and observant enough to know when something triggers."

"It was quite an overwhelming urge regardless." she added.

He nodded. "Yes, one that tapered off with an increasing sensation of pleasure. It held a necessity, and the urgency to resolve the lack enabling the overwhelming sense of pain. You won't happen to know anything about that, would you?"

She studied him, almost believing him instantly, but with a hint of self-doubt to her tone, stated, "I am not

certain of possible causation yet. So I am going to explain a few things that happened while you were under the Revirna transformation and you can tell me what you think caused the effect here although I already have some ideas."

He nodded in agreement. "I must warn you that I read the notes you intentionally left behind."

"Okay," she replied. "That should make this easy. Do you remember the Ee qualifier?"

He nodded. "The Elusive element, yes."

She hesitated briefly. "Well, it became so elusive, it no longer held a distinction, and could no longer keep you in relative existential order, that is, there was deficiency in levitating and artificially sustaining the mental calmness that kept you away from the HEP invasion."

"Neural composure?" he asked.

She hesitated briefly, shying away from alluding to the mental psychosis invoked in the HEP invasion and the inevitability she endured to counteract such invocation with what may be considered an antipsychotic. She could hardly fool him. "Relative equilibrium for the HEP and HEA to help retain the elusiveness of the Ee. The—"

He squinted, studying her. "An antipsychotic?"

She hesitated briefly. "Neural inductions for composure, yes."

He studied her, holding a subtle amused expression

despite her level of professionalism with him. Was he being treated like a lesser intellectual? "An antipsychotic induction for neural composure?"

She hesitated, studying him. "A non-relative optimization for the Ee."

He raised an eyebrow. "Are you being intentionally evasive for a different reason or treating me strictly as a patient?"

She exhaled. "I am simply explaining something to you Dylan."

He frowned. "Do you mean Dr. Morris?"

She studied him. What was the cause for the sudden pride-induced anger? What was to become of it? Had he not taken his medication earlier in the morning? "Yes, Dr. Morris. There was a need for restraint and sustenance of the relevant states."

He spoke in a dark but subtle tone. "What is symptomatic of the HEP invasion as I recall them are pretty distinctively predictive. There is the inevitability of debauchery, the yearning for pleasures and pain beyond mere human comprehension. There is the gradual but inevitable cellular death, the type I apoptosis, the type II accelerated autophagy. And thirdly, there is the inevitability of psychosis. Is this neural composure regimen about psychosis or something else?"

She was silent briefly. "The accelerated autophagy is what induces the psychosis."

He gained silence for a few seconds. "There is no



bottom line for it then, is there?"

She nodded in agreement. "There is no bottom line still. You're a miracle Dr. Morris."

He repeated the question to denote his seriousness on the issue. "There is no bottom line for it, is there Biola?"

"Dr. Moore," she corrected.

He exhaled, flashed a sarcastic smile, and spoke in a more urgent tone. "Dr. Moore, am I a working corpse or a functional derelict?"

She squinted, swallowing the strange position his statement portrayed her and their relationship.

"Dylan..." she cautioned.

"Dr. Morris to you, Dr. Moore," Dylan answered sharply.

She knew in the moment he hadn't taken the prescribed medication she worked hard to be both a doctor and pharmacist for while he was asleep. Was he testing her or testing his limits? She also knew if he refused to take them she was going to need the boys' assistance to restrain him, something she couldn't imagine going well for all involved. She held a steady gaze with him, subtle, overwhelming. Any indeterminate action from his inclined psychotic propensity would be disheartening. She would be easily overpowered.

He held her eyes. "Am I zombied entity brought awake for your loverboy dreams with antipsychotics or is this something more sinister than that? Am I

pinocchio? Am I a real boy?"

The questions reverberated in the room. So did her silence while in fear of some uncontrolled response from him. "Dr. Morris, I'm afraid if you can not speak to me with the professional decorum I expect of you—"

He spoke in a daunting echoic tone. "Is there a bottom line for this neural composure?"

She hesitated briefly, thinking of some way to signal admittance without acknowledging what he wanted. "Blind horse being blind buffed."

He hesitated briefly. "A regression line?"

"A multi-directional regression line," she replied. "The bottom line is not the only aspect unresolved."

"But it is a line and has directional limitations," he replied.

She nodded in agreement. "North or south, east or west, if we snooze, we lose."

"I already snoozed once," he announced. "Can I infer the conditioning for the neural composure optimization within temperate limits or you're going to tell me about it?"

She remained silent for a few seconds. "There is a pain-pleasure principle inductance between the HEP and HEA which necessitates psychoneurological differentials, a ranging of inception, initiatives, receptivity—"

"Pleasure, pain..." he interrupted. "...scalar

initiatives without the action potentials."

She exhaled. "The insensitivity to pain in oneself and in those of others. The thing you must feel so the necessity of pain is what must be your cure first. The very thing to stop the destructive and murderous initiatives of the HEP, the very thing that could stop the dehumanization and death that came with the invasion."

He frowned. "So when you no longer want to inflict pain, the question Dr. Moore is; do you want to inflict pleasure?"

She held his eyes steadily, spoke in a low, intentionally detached tone. "It had to be done. Pleasure is the sensitivity marker for the pain. What becomes actionable must derive the same in reality—seek pleasure as cure for the pain with the presiding pain as a precursor."

\*\*\*\*

The advent of a reckoning determines its constitution, that of its outlines precludes space, that of its misfire concludes an event.

The harsh knock on the door came close to dawn, startling them out of the comfort of her bed.

They both stared at the door, unwilling to approach it, knowing the full implications of the discovery. What was she to be ashamed of, afraid of, a full blooded

woman with a human right to consent?

Her heart raced, having never been that way with the boys with expectation of some unforeseeable retribution. But the HEP invasion had taught her to be brave in ways she never thought possible. She had been able to keep them at bay. They had never dared to knock on her bedroom door or sneak into it. It was apparent that her respectability was at a loss because of her love life. How was she to save herself? How was she to save Dylan?

What was she to do if things got out of hand? Her anxiety deepened at the thought of the innumerable ways things could get out of hand. If they killed him to harm her, would she kill? If she kills, could she ever be the same? Did her ethical leanings matter in the face of such horrors? Should it?

He moved confidently towards the door. The knocking could break the door any minute and they both knew it.

"Dylan," she called with a cautious tremor to her tone.

But he was unrelenting in his approach towards inevitable trouble. And she could do nothing about it.

His gaze towards her was that of resignation and the inevitability of the moment. She understood it and held her breath as the door opened.

He opened the door to two automatic rifles and a Baretta.

She clutched at her night dress, crossing her arms over her chest as some inexplicable form of self protection.

Dick and Alan held the automatic rifles to his face, the nuzzles nudging at him. They took him to his knees with them.

He complied ungracefully.

Her mind raced at the possibility of the fears she knew they harbored, those evident in the close contact assault on Dylan. Was there some superpower he had she didn't know about yet, some unrelenting energizing instinct that could kill the men in a split second, leave her with nothing but regret?

Dick retrieved his rifle, held Alan's eyes, and issued a direct command. "Lover-boy here makes a sudden move, blow his beastly brains out."

Biola gasped.

Dick turned to Biola in that instant, He spoke in a low mocking tone. "One would think the boy toy doctor is still getting better, slowly becoming human, but I bet we both know what he is well enough to do, don't we know Dr. Moore?"

Biola exhaled, closing her eyes.

Dick shook his head. "Oh, come on Dr. Moore. Pleasure can't turn to pain that quickly. Was that a test of his humanity? Or the abuse of yours?" He moved closer to Biola.

Dylan groaned.

Alan pressed the nuzzle of the automatic tightly against Dylan's forehead, his arms steadying as his fingers caressed the trigger. "Hey dickhead, mistakes happen

around here no one comes back from. You wanna be like that?"

Dylan went tone silent.

Dick spoke. "You must answer questions when you are asked, Dr. Morris... not doing that shit got people killed while you were asleep, dreaming or whatever the hell that was."

Alan pushed the automatic down on Dylan's forehead, tilting his head backward. "Are you still a human Doc? You're not you, you're sleeping with the help. Did you lose yourself, your hardcore respectable morals, do no harm or whatever you doctors call it while you were under, asleep or whatever the hell she called it?"

Dylan remained silent.

Biola knew Alan was at a high and would not stop talking trash, and is in full propensity for physical violence unless stopped. She spoke. "Which is the question Alan?"

"Shut the hell up Dr. Moore!" Dick snapped.

Dylan groaned.

Dick turned around to aim his automatic at Dylan's head. "If Alan misses I won't miss a fraction of an inch for any given split second Dr. Morris."

"He's an excellent marksman," Alan added.  
"Something a medical doctor may not know."

Dylan exhaled.

Dick continued. "I may not be half an inch as smart as

you but I have the action and the premonition of guns, ammunition, and larger weaponry. We survived the HEP assault by fighting. You, even when you were around, had the luxury of being a doctor, the doctor, the one who got to preach, tell us not to commit war crimes, lived accordingly. We fought and watched our people, especially the women, drop down like flies. You have no idea what that fighting was about. You have no idea what that is. So Dr. Moore, I will tell you again, politely this time, to answer questions whenever you are asked. I just want some respect around here, now, is that too much to ask?"

Biola swallowed her tongue, pondering how the world had radically changed with the Human Element having gone bananas, losing its mind and heart to HEP.

"Answer the question Dr. Morris," Dick commanded.

Dylan remained silent.

Despite her fears, Biola couldn't help speaking in the predicament. "There are about three questions and counting now. Which one do you want him to answer?"

Dick did the expected, retrieved his automatic and turned to face Biola again. "Shut the hell up Dr. Moore! You know what..." He hesitated scanning her appearance. "Maybe you did all this for you..."

"She couldn't have," Nathan complained.

Dick shook his head. "She sure could have. She nursed him like a baby. She's got a thing for him. And then lo and behold, he ends up in her bed at dawn, something he wouldn't have done had he not been nursed to death and then back from it."

"She couldn't have," Nathan maintained.

But Dick's doubt was not feigning. He squinted. "Is he retarded in some way and you're using him?"

"This happened before the HEP invasion," she said.

Dylan closed his eyes at the thought of her insinuation, holding against the urge to deny such in the predicament.

Alan teased Dylan's forehead with the automatic. "Is that true Dr. Morris, you two were at it before the HEP invasion?"

Dylan closed his eyes, and decided on going along with Biola's lies. Swallowing the pride he already lost, he opened his eyes and said, "Yes."

Silence was maintained for a few seconds.

Alan spoke. "It wouldn't be crazy that we three want the same thing you've got over there. Is that too much to ask?"

Dylan shrugged. "No."

Biola shivered, absorbing the sharp psychosomatic sensation of utter pain.

"No, what?" Alan asked.

Dylan held Alan's eyes. "No, I don't think that's too much to ask."

Silence presided in the room again.

Alan spoke. "And?"



Dylan continued. "And she's a free woman. She can do whatever she wants. She gets to decide."

Dick let out a sick sarcastic laughter and began to pace. "This is not happening... It couldn't have happened if a dead man wasn't forcefully brought back to life for whatever reason. And we all know it was her who insisted on it. She did this."

"She couldn't have," Nathan maintained.

Dick stopped pacing and walked over to stand beside Alan. "I'm afraid I have to inform you that we too will be taking our turns. We—"

Biola let out a sharp shrieking sound that did not stop.

Alan spoke in a stern sympathetic tone. "Calm down Dr. Moore. Please stop."

She stopped briefly to catch her breath before the realization of what could happen to her overtook her mind. She belted out a louder more emotionally charged shriek.

"Shut up Dr. Moore!" Dick yelled.

She did not stop.

"Oh shut the hell up Dr. Moore," Alan scolded, pushing the automatic against Dylan's head harshly. "It aint that bad. He did it."

Her shrieks turned into loud cries which grew in intensity.

Dick leaned over Dylan and yelled. "Is no one gotta stop her or I have to bitch slap her?"

"Biola," Dick called and maintained a brief second of silence to allow her cries to stop. "Screaming will not help. We already completed the necessary action. Tell them about our plan to extend the cure."

Dick frowned. "Extending the cure?"

Biola resolved her chaotic nerves and focused on his brilliant suggestion. She spoke in an intermittently breathless tone. "We're going to make the cure work faster. And you can go out there and pick whatever female you want at early stages of the HEP invasion and they will be treated with better, faster conditioning than Dylan. If otherwise, you touch me, in any shameful way, I will kill myself and burn the lab."

"Calm down Dr. Moore," Dick said in a much softened tone.

"I don't want anyone but Dr. Moore," Nathan announced.

Dick glanced towards Nathan. "You don't know that."

Nathan shook his head, directed his eyes to hold Dick's eyes. "I know that. I want Dr. Moore. We have to kill him like we said."

Biola screamed.

"Shut the hell up Dr. Moore! And let me explain," Dick scolded.

Biola quieted.

Dick continued. "We were hyped when Nathan told us Dr. Morris was sleeping with you. We blurted whatever came out in the heat of the moment. We can't actually

afford to kill your boy if you need him to save our world. I—"

"I definitely need him to save our world," she interrupted. "Or nothing is saved. I need him."

Dick rushed the boys to a corner and they whispered amongst themselves.

"Dr. Moore!" Nathan called as Biola rushed to Dylan's side to hug and comfort him.

The boys came back to find both physicians in a kneeling position, comforting each other.

"Okay," Dick announced. "We get the subjects. Your boy comes with us. He's the strongest collateral we've got in case this turns to treachery. We die, he dies. If for whatever reason I smell something fishy on your part at any and all stages of this process Dr. Moore, it's his head."

\*\*\*

Everything independent and biological is in the entity a disruption, a foreign object in the matter of factual life, neither matter nor mind nor measure but delusional in nature, in science, in life—a state of no material consequence or aftermath for mischance. To something there is reality, truth and nature.

They packed themselves in a four by four like feral dogs escaping some earthly realm towards a much harsher reality of solemn savagery.

Dylan had a sudden and sharp surge of emotional influx, a growing sense of growing discomfort symptomatic of asphyxia, a rise of generalized hypoxia. And his rush to self-diagnosis, rushed him quickly to causation rather than prognosis. He yanked the protective gas mask he was forced to wear as a most necessary cautionary specification.

Dick glanced at him in the backseat through the front car mirror. "What the hell are you doing? Put that shit back on."

"I'm immuned," he voiced as strongly and strangely as he could master, unsure of the potency of his immunity.

Dick studied him through the mirror. "I don't have time for your shit Dr. Morris. Dr. Moore is not here to save you however much she begged us to tranquilize. Killing you will be easy. So don't play crap with me today. We have five HEP ones to catch."

Dylan frowned. "Five?"

"Don't correct my math Dr. Morris. A lot can go wrong in this game."

Dylan held Dick's eyes through the mirror. "I and Biola have a hospitable expectation for three."

He shrugged. "And we didn't expect to find you in her bed. A lot can go wrong in this game."

The exchange ended the argument and Dylan looked out the window as the car traveled, grateful to see the end of the strained discourse.

The rancid smell of human regression was hardly that

of biological decay. It was in the psychoactive detachment HEP imposed. The streets were emptied of the cordiality of social interactions, and the void sang like some unfortunate chord stretched thin against its own accord.

Aside from his subliminal perception of cobwebs and dust, a decaying pile of uncared-for garbage and corpses, the man-made infrastructure around him looked pristine. The dilapidation in the appearance of social and infrastructural spaces didn't happen.

The infected had no taste for human flesh. Based on the psychobiological effect of the infection, they were rather starving to death without hope in the overwhelming sensation of hunger normally applicable. The lack of instinct to reverse the course of the hunger seemed involuntary and inevitable. The absorption of the Human Element into psychosis was absurd.

He wondered briefly what the scarcity of HEP 1 infected populace could do to the aims of the trip. How easily can simple deficiencies turn horrible?

With the mind-neural impulse behavior coordination of the HEP 1 in degeneration, the infected held some inexplicable hostility towards others, and the tendency towards violence increased greatly. So did the burgeoning crime wave that followed. Their appearance was the same or nearly the same as their human counterparts. There was hardly any physical trait to tell of the infection. They indulged mainly in easily provoked or largely unprovoked attacks. They spiked and sparked sideways and parallel, like some mania on the consistent escapade of violence.

HEP II symptoms devastate physical appearance. The symptomatic Hemorrhage, Cerebral Edema encouraged the swelling of the head to twice or thrice its original size. It seemed fortunate, barely, when the eventual fatality of the congestive heart failure put an end to the extreme and extremely dangerous crime wave they were notorious for.

HEP III symptoms devastate physical appearance and aggravated the thirst for violence. Their thirst for violence became so unbearable, mass execution of HEP III infected humans were ordered. They were killed on sight in some districts for the split-instant initiative they had for harming others. The government offered rewarding benefits for their body counts. They became a game, a most dangerous game exploit, as they did not stop their short burst initiative of active violence until their prey was dead.

They hunted with blind inexplicable and unprovoked fury. Within the framework of the split-second initiative towards violence is also the split-second fidelity of sudden cardiac death. HEP III infected is the sharpest instinctual animal, a time limited predestinate beast, a catastrophic ticking time bomb. It occurred to Dylan with renewed realization that they were on a human hunt rather than a scavenger hunt the boys were used to while he was asleep.

They circumvented a sparsely populated area before they saw any sign of life. The car stopped when Dick chose a spot and gathered the usual crew the usual way before acknowledging Dylan.

Unused to the ritualistic therapy session before an inevitable combat, Dylan stayed back, and on discovery

of the ritual, pulled himself back

Dick invited him with a slight expression of invitation mixed with disdain.

He accepted the invitation by leaning towards them slightly.

"Can Dr Moore do your job Dr Morris? You may die out here today," Dick said.

Dylan pondered the question, wondering if it was a question or statement. "The deal was perfectly clear. Biola told you to preserve my life at all cost. That's because she knows she can't do her job without me."

Dick shrugged. "Well, costs change depending on the circumstance. For instance, I suggest you put your gas mask on to prevent the effect of the tear gas meant to incapacitate the infected alongside help prevent the possibility of infection every step of the way. Are you immune to the toxicity of such gasses too?"

Dylan considered his request merely briefly before deciding his dizziness as well as his probability of surviving toxic gasses was a matter of test and time. He put the gas mask on knowing its risks and prescribed benefits.

in an authoritative tone, Dick spoke to the group. "The first initiative command is to kill on sight except for an apparent beneficial element today. And I don't mean a maybe-element that there is a slight possible trace of humanity there. There must be clear and apparent signs of humanity there. Any slight abnormality of the head, and you shoot to kill. A flash of light, a normal size undiseased head and yes, use your tranquilizer to get

the subjects. Otherwise, shoot to kill. We run this, we do it as a pack. Do not rely on Dr Morris to use his gun Nathan. He seems to have everything we don't have, that is, some strange strength and immunity..." He held Nathan's eyes briefly. "Keep him close to you. I and Alan can carry the main job."

They made their way effortlessly towards what used to be a gated system of apartment complexes of three floors, towards the apartment building with the most heat.

Dick recognized the building for their second raid attempt. The first was to recruit best combat soldiers possibly trapped with HEP infected close relatives and associates. They came back empty.

He designated the first floor to Nathan and Dylan, the second to Alan before he took to the third in strides.

The hallway stretched far and near. Speed as well as skills mattered most in the execution of the mission. He decided quickly combat from the other end of the hall would be a smarter move. In a whimsical but deliberate sprint-slide, he made his way to the back, dropping two cans of military grade CS tear gas.

Once on the extreme, he made sure the tranquilizer guns strapped tightly to the main automatic he had was securely fastened to the semi-automatic he held, which had been chosen for the deliberation needed in the proper eradication of HEP III infected bodies. He pondered on the probability of the effectiveness of the heat sensor goggles briefly. Equipped with the effectiveness of the CS tear gas needed for a geometric measure of the shape of the head, it was the least



effective gear they carried.

As the first door opened and the incongruity of the head was observed in the emergence, he realized what he had predicted. The heat sensor signatures were faint. HEP III subjects were fully cold blooded animals. But regardless of the faintness of their signatures, under inspection, a lack of symmetry was readable.

The first shot was an instant hit, bringing two HEP III bodies into focus. The fluidity of the cerebral Edema had always been unpredictable, providing a lodge environment for the bullet rather than a killshot of disintegrating matter.

The first headshot barely made a difference but for the hole used as the entry point. The effects, if felt at all, were mostly felt with the passage of time. To bring an HEP III to a stop, he needed the effect of the bullet to be felt. To kill the creature, he needed to make a fatal mark. Killing them required anatomically viable precision. Killing them required a lot of bullets. He brought a lot with him as well as an automatic rifle. The next shots were a round of two, and the HEP III drop brought the second HEP III body too close for comfort before he triggered two quick successive shots into the chest.

"Come out, come out, you shitheaded suckers!" Dick yelled, triggering the hypersonic sound range of all possible HEP III around before he broke the door to the closest apartment to him down. No heat signature was found in the apartment.

He took down an HEP II with a headshot in the hallway as he emerged from the first apartment before he broke

down the door to the adjacent apartment to discover faint heat signatures out of his proximal sight. There were two.

The source was in a closed door room in the apartment. He killed the male in the room conveniently equipped with a pistol and triggered the tranquilizer gun for the first time. The male had been holding a pistol. Sign of life? He realized the irrelevancy in his judgment. He had to kill the male for the female with the same instinct the male had to try and kill him. His instinct was sharper but their foundational instinct was similar.

He rushed out of the room into the view of an HEP III almost too late. Had he miscalculated their flight reaction to the disturbing noise of him breaking down doors? He triggered downward until the third shot stopped the HEP III body briefly. For the fourth shot, he raised the semiautomatic from the abdominal cavity back to the thoracic cavity for another shot.

The HEP III body was yet merely stilled,

Dick studied the body for the split second he could afford in case of its reawakening. The Edema complex was present all over the body, the Cerebral Edema being the worst. His shots as he went downward had been shots in between cavities to maximize possible damage.

Why was the HEP III still and not down? Advanced stages of the HEP or some mutation on their part?

The HEP III bridged the nose of his extended gas mask, having had the extended distal propensity surge of the advanced HEP III stage, and headbutted him with a

questionable deflated force.

Dick staggered backward , shooting the tranquilizer as he went backward to further dissuade the intensity of the approach. The body came to another sluggish halt.

Dick retrieved the handheld automatic from his side holster and didn't release the trigger on the midline drift from thoracic to pelvic cavity.

The HEP III dropped to the floor . And he rushed towards the hallway again to clear the floor on his search for another HEP 1 potential lifeline.

\*\*\*

A catastrophe to an act a misadventure, a misadventure to a tragedy a misfortune, and a misfortune to ruination, a casualty.

He got the girls down to the base floor to face new problems. The head count for the HEP bodies was two short and Dylan was missing. His fluid-drenched bloodied gas mask touched Nathans in a jiffy. "You couldn't even handle an old ass deader than a living doctor, could you now stupid ass?"

Nathan spoke in a subdued tone. "He freaked out on me. Said something about being hypersonic and delirious. I could hardly hold on to one body count. I had none and could have mistakenly shot him instead of an HEP. I made my way out to ensure I don't make stupid mistakes. I lost him barely more than a minute

ago."

"And?"

"I'm sure he will be fine. I will go back once the CS gas fully dissipates," Nathan replied.

Dick closed his eyes for a few seconds, swallowing his anger before he dashed into the first floor of the apartment complex. He had appointed the first floor to Nathan and Dr. Morris because it had been an easier target and they had been easily raided.

The smoke was clearing as he went inside. "Dr. Morris," he called.

He didn't get an answer.

He cleared the open door rooms easily as he went from room to room. When he got to the fourth, he encountered a door slightly ajar on a water-drenched floor. He frowned, without a reevaluation or second thought to the implication of a wet floor.

He traced the pathology of the wet floor to a strange occurrence, at least, one he considered strange. Two HEP bodies were entangled in sexual intercourse on the floor. He soon corrected himself. Dr. Morris was having sex with one of the HEP female bodies on the wet floor.

Dick made a quick calculation for the toxicity and danger levels of either of them and chose the HEP body. "What the hell are you doing Dr. Morris?" he asked, circumventing Dylan's active back to access the HEP body for execution. He ejected two shots into the head of the HEP body on the floor beneath Dylan. The consequence was felt simultaneously, the

miscalculation realized just as quickly.

The HEP body stilled. Induced catalepsy?

Dick saw the quick gleam of the Ruger-Max9 9mm pistol he had personally handed to Dylan for protection. He released the hold on the gun to hold on to the holes in his neck precisely placed, one on top of the  
'''''''''''''''' other like some bipolar flash card of misfortune slowly draining the fortune of life out of him.

Dylan was still pumping away on top of the damaged HEP III body as Dick dropped to the floor in an helpless heap of unpredictable disappointment.

Nathan rushed in three seconds later, scanned the scenario in a split second before pumping two quick tranquilizer shots into Dr. Morris.

He shot the HEP body twice in the head and twice in the chest before Alan came into the room and screamed.

## PART III

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*This book is brought to you without prejudice, with great beliefs in truth, decency, dignity and inclusion in science.*

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The benchmark bemoans the neglect spearheaded in scarce, an illusion for all else in risk of demise. It is the headlessness that bemoans its terms—its scarcity above the mark. It is the dissension in stasis, the correspondence at the edge of the animation, the rigor unknown, defeated without the repercussion of fact.

Biola watched Alan pace back and forth in great agitation, pondering whether she should take a more decisive military action and sedate him before voicing the condition of Dick's health. They had raced Dick's body back to her, hoping against hope the worst was yet preventable.

Nathan was silent in his seat, reservedly hopeless, as if her announcement was expected. After all, he had been the first aid to Dick in the hopes to save him. He had also been her understudy and best help through the HEP crisis. He knew the unexpected was to the expected.

She decided against the inhumane military approach, the forced sedation and walked to stand behind Nathan's chair. She looked down at him briefly, holding his eyes steadily with the usual expressional signaling for a helping hand.

Nathan stood and walked with her towards Alan .

"I'm sorry—" she started.

"No," Alan cried.

Biola exhaled. "Dick is dead."

"We have to kill him," Alan said without acknowledging her statement.

Biola felt a bit of relief that he wasn't going to storm into her room to try to kill Dylan. Was he asking her permission? She had kept Dylan locked away elsewhere. "I told you not to take him along with you and I told you why," she said as calmly as she could manage.

Alan stopped pacing and held Biola's eyes fully. "The fool cheated on you with a HEP body with a head the size of a bloated ape. I don't think you need him. He's a danger to us all."

She gained silence briefly and spoke as indifferently as she could manage. "I told you not to take him, not to expose him to any degree of cold or coldness."

Alan frowned. "What the hell does that mean?"

Biola studied him. "What the hell do you actually know about the conditions for HEP sufferers Alan?"

Alan deepened his frown. "Are you saying he didn't cheat on you with a bloated ape?"

Biola had taken little time to reconsider the medical reasoning she knew to be accurate, but she took a second in the moment to consider the personal morality that was once the conditioning for respectable human relationships.

Did Dylan cheat on her despite his nature and predisposition for such? And if he did or did not, whatever could his nature, the half-human, half-creature he was turning out to be, mean for the nature of their relationship? Would any HEP 1 sufferer have been a better human than the human Dylan was?



She spoke in a restrained tone. "I am saying he goes into a strict regression mode when he comes into contact with cold and coldness and is apt to seek alternative measures to realign back to the vacated mode. I am currently finding a way to help them stop. It doesn't matter if he cheated or not because he couldn't help himself. You saw the condition of the HEP II female, was he able to reason anything in the mode?"

Alan was silent for a few seconds, thinking. "Are you saying he didn't kill Dick?"

"That's not what she's saying," Nathan interjected.

"Shut up Nathan!" Alan scolded. "I'd rather hear it from Dr. Moore."

The room presided in deafening silence before she spoke. "He couldn't have killed Dick anymore than he could have intentionally and rationally chosen to sleep with the HEP body."

"And you imagine there was no intent on his part to achieve such animalistic aims?" Alan asked.

Biola hesitated before speaking. "I can tell you that he lacked the innate coordination that makes up for the mostly human instincts for it, including neural instinct, visual, auditory, rational and such. All in disarray, he couldn't have seen the HEP body for what she was. And for the same reasons he couldn't have seen the HEP body for what she was, he couldn't have seen Dick for what he was relative to him. While his instinct was to kill, his instinct could never have been clearly or humanely deciphered for the murder of Dick."

"He did not kill Dick?" Alan asked, eyes wide.

"He did not know what he was doing when he killed Dick," she announced.

Alan belted out a sarcastic laugh. "We're going to kill him right?"

There was silence in the room, the other two people in it choosing to maintain silence.

Alan deepened his frown, drew his head back slightly. "We're not going to let that sucker live after what he did to Dick, are we?"

She exhaled. "Any more than we can keep the girls alive for what they are capable of doing under the same circumstance unless I and Dylan figure out how to stop the same thing from happening again."

"I'll kill him, Dr. Moore," Alan said, narrowing his eyes. "I promise you, in reasonable time, I will."

\*\*\*

There is the great illusion against the natural conception—that artificial trenches may be able to overcome natural rifts. Depressions are to digression as the brain may be to mindless estates.

The harrowing cry was almost deafening to every ear within the proximity. It had emerged from Nathan but it could as well have been uttered by one of the three sleeping beauties in the Revirna Elevation.

The head, she recognized instantly as belonging to one

of the sleeping beauties stood, bloodied and drained of blood on a round plate, home to a round tray,

Biola moved towards the detached head with deliberate intent as she heard Alan's accusatory voice behind her.

"He did it," he said.

Biola stopped in her tracks, closed her eyes and exhaled. "He has been under since he got back. I made sure of it, Alan."

"Are we sure of that?" Alan asked, prompting her to turn around in an accusatory manner and face him.

He held her eyes rigidly. "I know he did it."

"You know a lot you have neither proof nor expertise for Alan," she replied.

Alan shook his head. "No one else could have done it. No one else up and going around here is capable of such savagery."

She widened her eyes. "Are we sure about that Alan?"

Alan was silenced briefly.

She spoke in a low subdued tone. "Since I am the only medical professional here, will you and Nathan please retreat to my office so I can do the job of inspecting the crime scene so I can brief you on the real nature of this murder."

Alan retreated, reluctantly.

Nathan did the same seconds later.

She turned to face the bloodied crime scene, noticing

the trail of blood on the floor as her eyes met the widely opened eyes of the dead head like some dead end abyss mirroring its interface on its surfaces, a frightening tale. She noticed the triangular wedges, the pattern at the base of the neck suggesting a sharp cutting instrument had been used to do the beheading.

\*\*\*

The enigma for the duper may be as dope for the pope—a hoodwink done not for glory but for clan.

Her office could hardly contain all three of them. But she took the time to explain her findings.

Alan was agitated, swearing, sweating profusely and little she was about to say or do would calm him down.

In coherent and deliberate vocalization within the small phases of time while she spoke, he repeated. "I'll kill him."

\*\*\*

That a malefactor benefits from his maleficence is as a maladjustment from the norm. The norm is an anomaly of normalcy.

The development phase for the new transformation for the Revirna Elevation was extremely short-spanned as Dylan had further perfected the time phase for the catalyst before she induced his second lengthy sleep, before the mission that killed Dick.

The awakening for the females was a world away from that for Dylan. The boys held on to pistols instead of the automatic and semi automatic rifles they had confronted Dylan's awakening with. They were welcomed with open arms and smiles. The romance blossomed quite easily as Alan chose Eve, and after a long and useless argument with Nathan, he chose Naomi, the unpaired female.

Dylan's lengthy induced sleep continued.

\*\*\*

The essences of a biopsychological tension must know the tangent ultimate to its extremes and those minimal to its composure. In tension, there is discord in the assurance of life—mortality is diminishing, chaotic and expiring. The assurance is never merely banal, common stock or unremarkable. The assurance of the tension is life, the force behind it, mind, vicious in its unmasking.

On the evening of Dylan's awakening, she cooked up a storm. And a storm it was. The dinner was supposed to make his reintroduction into society an unchallenging experience.

On the insistence she served them, they were seated.

She sat Dylan across the table from her, the girls on the two opposing sides to him. The men were closer to her.

The ladies were at their best, making small talk, agreeing admiringly with their assigned-mate's statements, smiling at the whim of any attention paid to them. Were they overly grateful for being chosen,

self-aware and human again? Was there some love bug in the air she had forgotten to catch or one that simply evaded her existence? Was it some love portion that accidentally missed her plate? Was it some estrogen-related side effect of the Revirna Elevation?

They ate in silence for a while before Alan, unable to help himself on the subject, spoke. "Why is Dr. Morris sitting on the other edge? Nobody ever sits there."

She exhaled, holding his eyes. "I didn't want to separate the new couples."

He glanced in Dylan's direction. "He didn't or you didn't?"

She hesitated briefly. "I didn't."

"And what the hell does he do around here?" Alan asked, raising his voice.

Dylan spoke. "Alan, I want to say sorry for—"

"Too little too late," Alan snapped.

"Can you ever forgive me?" Dylan asked.

Dylan shrugged. "Too late. All I think about is killing you."

"If you do that, what becomes of you?" Dylan asked.

Alan flew into a fury instantly. Standing abruptly to stare Dylan down as Eve held on to his hands to calm his fury. "I should have put a bullet in your brain there and then and saved us all this misery you piece of shit...dropped you like the bag of shit you are."

"Alan please," Biola pleaded.

Alan shook his head. "Don't Dr. Moore. The fool thinks he is the only important person in the room, hell, in this world as well. He's full of shit, unpredictable and a danger to us all."

"Alan please, sit down," Biola pleaded, touching his arm in an attempt to appease him.

Alan stiffened.

She had never seen him as angry as he appeared in the moment.

He flung her hand off his arm. "He killed one of us. He's dangerous to all of us."

Biola glanced in Dylan's direction with the knowledge the maltreatment and disregard for her kindness in the moment could trigger him.

It did.

Dylan raised his voice. "Sit down Alan, and behave like a proper gentleman. Be calm at the table."

Alan glanced towards Biola. "All I ever asked for was a reason to kill this fool," he said and began the walk towards Dylan.

Biola got on her feet and rushed after him.

"I never really needed a reason after all. I just needed to watch Dick die."

"Please stop," he heard Biola plead behind him but he didn't stop.

He appeared determined, unperturbed with the intent behind his actions.

"What the hell are you doing?" Dylan asked as Alan got close to him.

But Alan was unmoved on the move. He pointed the Glock 19 he held at Dylan's chest and fired once.

Biola screamed in shock as Alan turned around and walked past her. "If he is truly human, no Edema should stop his death," he commented as he pulled Eve towards the door.

Biola focused on saving Dylan's life.

\*\*\*

What is expected is thrown out and celebrated, like some outgrowth enlarged for the sake of the psyche. What changes the world makes its path, forms its patterns, finds its way to shape a trace hardly noticeable, highly remarkable. The inevitable is a reckoning.

The bullet had missed his heart by a few inches. Biola mourned the third induction of the sleep cycle. It implies the inevitable. Dylan was weak and as susceptible to harm as any human may be. And his need for unreasoned sources of pleasure in times of pain was a greater weakness than any ordinary human's.

She was, without him, less vulnerable, highly respected and untouchable. With him she was coupled in intellectual life and less alone. What was to give? She had been at his bedside day and night until his faint heartbeat became pronounced.



She had neglected the rest of the world for him as she debated the future in the proximity of Alan, Nathan, the ladies, sin, crime and revenge.

On the seventh day of nursing him, she pondered the state of her affairs. In a state of nature what truly gave? Who made the rules dictating life and death. Despite the real sacrifices she had made, was the dictate of everyday life yet to kill or be killed? Despite the sustainability, it was perfectly clear what feat she had made possible. How could the extreme moral dictate of some chaotic state of nature still be applicable?

Has she failed? Had she not achieved the impossible mostly without any man's help? Lost in her contemplation, she heard the loud bang of Nathan knocking against the lab walls.

He had done so in the last seven days she had been nursing Dylan. She ignored his presence. It was apparent he wasn't willing to go away in this instance. She slid a note under the door for him, gave him a few minutes for a response before going back to retrieve his reply.

*Something happened and I needed your help as usual. I can't do this on my own. Please help.*

She stared down the dark edges of the observatory room, motioned for Nathan to lower the visibility threshold so she could see him.

He did.

And as he came into view on the other side of the room, his hands were clenched together as if in some hopeless prayer mode as he mouthed, "I need your help."

She opened the bedside drawer and removed the Glock 17 automatic she found easy to handle, turned around and walked towards the door.

The Glock 17 met Nathan's forehead after she coded the password for the door.

She motioned him into the room but he glanced towards Dylan's unconscious form on the bed and retained his stance without voicing his thoughts.

He shook his head instead, moving forward slightly to press the muzzle of the Glock further into the muscles of his forehead.

She studied him.

"Please," he mouthed again.

She motioned for him to turn around, pressed the muzzle onto the base of his brainstem and pushed him forward with it.

He led her down the hall towards a familiar turn, one she hardly ever trekked.

She frowned. "Why are we going towards Alan's quarters?"

Nathan remained silent.

She didn't question him further. Their walk wasn't on some infinitesimal time loop.

As Biola got to the open door leading into Alan's room, she stood rigidly still between the hinges.

Two severed heads, Alan's and Eve's, both appearing to have been severed with the same instrument she had

suspected in the last beheading, sat on two opposing sides of the bed, to the east and to the west.

She stood still, as though transfixed by the sight, for a while, wondering what particular world she existed in, if the world harbored sanity and if she was ever going to come out of it.

\*\*\*

Appendages detached are phantoms in the making, a set of conditions throbbing at the heart of their illusion aside from reality.

Nathan and Biola sat facing each other in her office, both overwhelmed with fear, misery and mystery.

"We never considered the girls," Biola said.

Nathan was pensive, thoughtful and aloof. His reaction was slow. "But we considered Dr. Morris quite considerably and deservedly."

Biola narrowed her eyes, studying him. "Like the very last time this happened and he was sleeping?"

Nathan shook his head and sighed softly. "I am beginning to think he sleepwalks in his sleep."

She closed her eyes and opened it slowly. "It could be one of the girls . This could be some side effect of the newer version of the Revirna Elevation project."

Nathan shrugged. "It becomes inevitable it could be him as well. Phase one or phase two, does it matter when effects are horrible?"

"It does if we cannot know what's triggering the killing spree," she replied. "I have not had the opportunity to figure this out."

Nathan shook his head morosely. "I'm afraid Dr. Moore, if you don't figure it out soon, we'll all be dead."

She exhaled as they held onto each other's eyes in silent misery. She spoke in a low strained tone. "We have to tread carefully here. or indeed as you say it, we'll all be dead."

Nathan nodded, studying Biola briefly. "Let's consider this from a detective's perspective because there is seemingly no solution for this at the moment. You're usually more apt and on your feet about things like this."

She exhaled, shaking her head slowly. "It's shocking and overwhelming. if it's not them, it's us."

Silence presided in the room.

"If it's not me, it's you," Nathan expanded.

"It's not me," she announced.

"It's not me," Nathan added.

Silence presided in the room.

Biola spoke. "Our declarations do not resolve the probability of either of us being the killer,"

Nathan remained silent.

"My suspicion is on the girl," Biola announced.

Nathan raised an eyebrow . "You can't possibly mean Alan's, so it has to be mine. My girl?"

She nodded. "It has to be your girl."

They observed silence briefly as Nathan considered the possibility. "I believe the sleeping beauty-monster that is Dr. Morris has been sleepwalking in his sleep while you were on duty nurturing and over-watching him."

She frowned. "Is that some indirect implication of the probability I knew that this was going to happen?"

Nathan remained silent.

"And that I let it happen," Biola concluded.

Nathan hesitated. "And that you could have inadvertently allowed it to happen."

Biola hesitated briefly, thinking. "You could be doing the same with Dead Queen none the deader over there as well."

Nathan exhaled, holding her eyes steadily, leaned forward and spoke in a soft tone. "Doesn't that make Dr. Morris the king of deader than dead?"

She closed her eyes, thinking. "Then we must be each other's investigative counsel in the case so we're not biased."

Nathan nodded in agreement. "That we must be, or the murderer will be the last person standing."

She exhaled. "Then we must interview each other's significant other vigorously before we reconvene. Dylan is in the lab. Can you tell Naomi I'd like to see

her."

Nathan remained unresponsive, briefly lowering his eyes before raising them to hold hers. He spoke in a low emotional tone. "There's something I have to tell you."

She frowned, studying his sudden change in demeanor. "Tell me."

He engaged her eyes fully. "What happens if you catch your significant other in a compromising position?"

She raised an eyebrow. "You want relationship advice in a moment like this?"

He shook his head slightly. "No, it's something else. I caught Naomi and Dr. Morris having sex, a bowl of spilled ice on the floor next to them."

Biola swallowed her hurt alongside her pride. "You're suggesting she did that to get back at you."

He raised an eyebrow, shrugged. "Does it matter?"

\*\*\*

A fixed atmosphere cannot a world make, a difference without an instance of a moment never can time make.

He paced the observation room relentlessly. he had sensed her anger when he found the key code of the lab changed and her back to him when he knocked on the door.

She was seething, not with rage but a more subdued emotion. She could hardly quench her grief as anger was a less qualifying emotion for the occasion.

He slept by her door at the insistence of her indifference. When she opened the door, his back met the floor.

She watched him crawl upward until their eyes met.

"She brought a bowl of ice," he said.

She felt fully aggrieved, her every nerve ending throbbing in the moment, her every extremity culminating against the neural pathology in her brain. Her mind seemed momentarily estranged from the instinctual hinges of her brain. Was she becoming toxically indifferent or hopeless?

He was human enough to know why she locked him out, yet inhuman to instinctual dictates against his rational preceptions.

"Can this ever be your fault?" she asked.

"Technically yes," he replied.

"This would make you sort of like a machine wouldn't it?" she asked indifferently.

He exhaled. "An error-prone sustainable machine, yes."

\*\*\*

Adversity conquers delight, depresses the mind, progresses its plight, provokes insight; never does it harbor pride without its decline, nevertheless recline undignified.

Her eyes opened slowly at the bequest of a pained suspense enveloping her being. Her wrist felt restricted, her mind throbbing with a complex combination of

migraine with aura and vestibular migraine.

She was thoroughly overwhelmed with the emergence of some state of hopeless incapacitation, a purgatory of agony perpetually bordering on unreachable pleasures, bargaining on the possibility of death or salvation, aching for some utopia to be met in some afterlife.

She opened her eyes to an unbelievable vision of hell within some hell. She was on her knees, hands tied to two opposing extremes, her psychological sensitivity felt drugged and weakened.

Nathan sat in a seat quietly, watching her awakening.

Her eyes, she felt, could be playing tricks on her. She could be inside a dream within a dream, dragged on by some psychosomatic sensation of pain and the seeming longevity of hope in the moment.

There was that restrained sensation by her ankles. Her attempt to move her legs proved the assumptions about her predicament correct. Her ankles were restrained.

Her words were slightly slurred as she spoke. "What the hell are you doing?" she asked, her words echoing in her mind as if her mind was emptied of brain matter.

He remained silent.

"Untie me!" she commanded, writhing like a scared snake against her restraint.

He held her eyes fully. "So what can happen?"

She tried at the failure of sharpening her neural instincts at a loss. her headache was burgeoning, her vision slightly blurry, her strength against her restraint



nonexistent. She had doubted Nathan was the one seated, the one who spoke to her indifferently, as he couldn't bear to leave her in some helpless state of pain and suffering. But Nathan's voice was a distinctive soothing voice. Why wasn't he unchaining her, freeing her?

"Untie me!" she commanded.

He placed his elbows on his knees, his palms on his chin and stared at her.

"Untie me!" she commanded.

How he loved her, he thought. The woman. The doctor. The human.

"Where's Dylan?" she asked.

He retained silence.

She exhaled. "Did you kill him?"

He frowned, twisting his mouth in the process. "Why would I do that when I have Naomi. I am untouched by the cheating action with Dr. Morris. What about you? How did you feel about the cheating situation?"

She shrugged her pained shoulder. "We'll get over it."

"We?" he asked.

She nodded. "I and Dylan as you will say of you and Naomi. We have to move on and away from this."

He squinted, studying her. "Really?"

She nodded. "Yeah really. Why am I tied up Nathan? Did Dylan do this?"

"Dylan?" he asked.

She studied him. "Yes, Dylan. And where is Naomi?"

He gained silence for a few seconds.

"What the hell is going on?" she asked.

"It's crazy..." he commented, hesitating briefly, studying her.

"Could they still be going at it?" she asked.

He leaned forward slightly. "I don't know. Should we look in the bathroom?"

She felt a burgeoning surge of relief that felt artificial, chemical. Was she drugged under and slowly being revived with a pain killer? "Whenever, however Nathan, could I have qualified for a pang of Numelgin?"

When I realized you're going to have to be awake and alert for this," he replied.

She frowned. "For what? Are we going to the bathroom? Are they coming here? Untie me Nathan."

Nathan sat back in his chair, holding her eyes steadily, fully. "You know what they say about love."

She shook her head vigorously. "No, no, no, no."

He scowled. "What? What? What? I mean, what is love anyway? Is it preservation? Is it? Because I have a different philosophy regarding love. I don't know what it is anymore. Is that a sign of the times that you are alive and tied up rather than dead at the moment because of the compound interest of who you are and

the fact that I can't help but love you."

She was silenced briefly. "Where is Dylan and Naomi?" she asked in a low subdued tone.

He raised his eyebrows. "I don't know Dr. Moore. Where are they? Are they in the bathroom?"

She shivered visibly. "I don't know Nathan, are they?"

Nathan exhaled and sat back in his chair. "This, I am certain of Dr. Moore. Naomi is dead, beheaded with her detached head in the bathroom. Do you know where Dr. Morris is?"

She stiffened. "Then it's between you and Dylan."

Nathan managed a sarcastic smile. "By this, do you mean the murders?"

She nodded. "Yeah, the murders. Isn't that why I'm tied up? You wanna kill me too?"

He leaned forward slowly. "I don't know Dr. Moore. Where is Dr. Morris?"

She shook her head. "I don't know. Is it you or did he tie me up?"

He shrugged. "If you tell me where he is, I should be able to ask him."

"I don't know where he is," she replied.

He studied her. "Could he be in the bathroom with Naomi?"

"Did you check the bathroom?" she asked.

He shrugged. "I don't know, did you?"

She shook her head. "Nathan, will you stop circumventing whatever the hell happened and just tell me what the hell is going on."

He narrowed his eyes before they met hers fully. "There's actually a way to capture this seeming conundrum, Dr. Moore. There are two people in a science lab in a persistent existential purgatory and there are two heads in the bathroom without existential bodies. Welcome to the cycle of progress Dr. Moore."

She screamed.

He let her.

She quieted and began to cry.

He let her.

Her cries slowly turned to whimpers. "Why did you kill Dylan?" she asked in a breathless helpless tone.

He raised his eyebrows. "I don't know Dr. Moore. Did I?"

She closed her eyes slowly, painfully.

He placed his elbows to his knees, his palm to his chin, his fingers across his mouth before he spoke in a near-whisper. "It was extremely difficult to imagine or foresee Dr. Moore. It had to be you."

She dropped her head.

He gained silence for a few seconds. "When?" he asked.

She didn't raise her head. She didn't respond.

"When?"

It was the first time Nathan ever yelled at her. It dawned on her that the dynamics of their relationship had changed. She slowly raised her head. Feigning ignorance in the moment. "When what?"

He narrowed his eyes, steadily.

She felt exposed, vulnerable, two things she hadn't experienced in too long.

"When were you infected?"

She began to whimper, slowly.

"Stop the crap!" he snapped. "Answer the simple question, Dr. Moore, you should know. When were you infected?"

She pondered the situation she was in at the moment, as he repeated the question in a harsher tone. "When Dylan was sleeping," she replied.

"When Dr. Morris was sleeping?" Nathan asked.

She closed her eyes and opened them slowly. "In the beginning," she replied.

He widened his eyes. "Dear universe! Since Dr. Morris slept. That is such a long time to uphold a lie!"

She exhaled. "It is," she resigned sadly, pondering her current situation and the sacrifices she had to make. "I have to take my medications," she said.

"Sure," he responded. "I don't want you to turn into a

monster on my watch now, would I? Why did all this fail?"

Biola shook her head, an overwhelming sensation of failure enveloping her.

Nathan shook his head, overwhelmed with emotions as well. "I know you know Dr. Moore. Why did all this fail? I worked with you at the worst of times. I definitely deserve to know."

She raised her head to hold his eyes, agreeing that he deserved to know. "The pain-pleasure principle inductance between the HEP and HEA which necessitates psychoneurological differentials, a range of actionable initiatives, is fundamentally flawed, essentially fraud. The injectability of possible cataclysmic actions like beheading people in some involuntary psychotic state ensures that between the actionable marker of the essential state to the same reality of the Revirna Elevated self, there was no real vectorization. The vectorization of the Revirna elevation is an unnaturally forced vectorization. This disaster was inevitable."

Nathan closed his eyes painfully and slowly opened them. "Why are you better than Dylan?"

She hesitated briefly. "I caught mine early and treated it early."

He nodded. "As an expert doctor would. Why is your strain deadlier?"

She frowned. "What?"

He exhaled as he held her eyes fully. "Yours is deadlier

than theirs in a different sort of way. I am certain you are aware of that fact."

She hesitated briefly, thinking, considering, reconsidering. She spoke in a low resigned tone. "Mine is more of a disorder, more psychological than material."

"You were pretending to be one of us and not the murderer you are?" he asked.

She swallowed her pain and pride in the moment. "It is much more uncontrollably symptomatic, like some sort of phonic grandstanding, an appeal to humanity only when there is order. The psychological disorder can manifest anytime uncontrollably, or rather subconsciously."

"You do remember," he asked in an accusatory tone.

She hesitated briefly. "I have some post-incident memories, yes."

He gained silence for a few seconds. "Why did you kill Dylan?"

She closed her eyes painfully and opened it slowly. "You've never met a true scientist Nathan until you have met one who believes the smell of something is incorrect, erroneous maybe, fallacious maybe, inaccurate perhaps or maybe unnatural is the smell of death. Something was widely off the mark with Dylan. Besides, I just couldn't take the pain anymore," she replied.

An uncomfortable silence presided in the room.

Nathan exhaled and sat back in his seat. "It had to be you," he muttered to himself.

"How did you know?" she asked in a low resigned tone.

His hand met the side of his face as he pondered briefly. "I compared the medical doctor I knew to the creature you have become. The statement you used to make kept replaying in my mind. "No one with a decent ounce of wisdom in life and nature will ever seek vengeance for the sake of vengeance". You could never have killed Dr. Morris even if he betrayed you. The beloved medical doctor I knew died so a creature can exist, a powerful highly unpredictable deadly creature."

The silence that ensued stung the air like some pungent grip of death.

Nathan spoke. "I am now left with the pain of leaving you alive rather than death and ensuring you don't get to kill me. This is the cycle of now. This is the way we end."

She shook her head. "This can't be Nathan. This isn't good for either of us."

He held her eyes fully. "Good or bad, this is the way we end from the life you created from the catastrophe you were."

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