**THE SHEPHERD**

**Part 1: The Pacific Island**

The waves were gentle and soft. They rarely had a mood. It was almost fall but it was still warm. The sky was partially cloudy, with a couple of small grey clouds that looked as if they might rain a couple warm drops but nothing more. It was just another peaceful day at the Pacific.

Pauline was sitting on the sand watching the distance. She spotted them twice before, but it was on exceptionally clear days. Still she watched the horizon where she saw them earlier. One looked very tall and big. The other two were shorter, but given how far they were, they must be quite big as well.

At 6 years old, Pauline was quite mature for her age, but nevertheless a child. Her Asian eyes were looking intelligently and curiously at every element in the world, analyzing the cause and effects and memorizing the details. She wasn’t very chubby but did have those puffy cheeks common in northern China.

Just as she had concentrated in the horizon, a seagull came with a fish in its mouth and laid it down to start eating. Pauline all at once turned her attention to the seagull that was about 5 yards away. She slowly got up and then dashed at the seagull. The seagull tried its best to keep hold of the fish but had to flap away leaving it behind. Pauline tried to catch the fish, but the fish was still alive and was able to wiggle back into the coming wave.

Just then, Pauline stepped on something and made an “ouch” sound. She looked under her foot and found a piece of shiny thing. It was different than all the seashells she had seen. This one felt flexible. She tried bending it and it did bend a little bit. Just as she was watching the strange object, her mom came with hurried steps from behind the sand hill. “Pauline, what are you doing here? I have been looking for you.” She yelled from 20 yards away.

Marie was thirty something and looked like Eastern European. Her curly brunette hair flowed down her shoulders to the top of her beautiful island dress adorned with flower patterns. Her figure was fit and her skin was tanned. There was a big pink flower on her hair.  
  
She slowed down as she approached Pauline. “What are you holding there?” She asked. Pauline showed her the shiny ring. Marie took it, observed it, and frowned. “Oh, this is metal. We need to give this to Momma Joline.” She said. She held Pauline’s hand and they walked together back to the village.  
  
The village was in a green valley surrounded by hills with cook pines, papayas, palms, coconut, avocado, and mango trees. It was a paradise like in stories. There were about 200 women and girls gathered about a meadow, which was overlooked by a hale (traditional Hawaii house) on one of the hillsides. There were about 50 hales scattered about the valley. Some had gentle smoke venting from clay chimneys on their sides, some had farm animals around them, and some had small gardens.  
  
There were women carrying harvest, cooking on campfires, knitting or weaving, and kids playing on the magnificent green meadow. There were some sheep and chickens around and a percussive music was coming from somewhere. No men were to be seen around.  
  
Pauline and Marie went towards the large hale of Momma Joline. There they found her rushing in and out of her hale, hurriedly talking to some women outside who were boiling some water, and then going back inside. She was wearing a white sheepskin throw over and a grey knit shaman hat. She looked around 60 and quite energetic for her age.  
  
Momma Joline was acting like something cooking in her hale. Marie caught her for a moment and asked, “Is everything okay Momma?” Momma Joline said “Yes darling. We are preparing for a big celebration.” When they had left the village to pick berries near the beach, there were no mentions of a celebration. It must have been a sudden event, Marie thought. Then she showed Momma the shiny ring.  
  
Marie: Pauline found this on the beach.  
Momma took the ring and inspected it for a second.  
Momma: Ah, it’s metal. We need to put it in the crater. I will do that later. Now we have to get this done.  
  
Marie loved the confidence of Momma. She always knew what to do and how to cure most health issues. They were all grateful to her and she received a lot of respect. Nobody would ever act against her word. Marie watched as Momma rushed back in her hale and come back out after 5 minutes.  
  
The preparations took 2 hours. Soups, potions, salads, fruits and drinks were prepared. The sweet smell of wood fire dazzled the minds. Momma went in her hale one last time and stayed for forty minutes. Then she came out with a baby wrapped in a towel. Everyone stood facing her. Then she lifted the baby and all women cheered.  
  
Momma left the baby in a crib shaded by banana leaves. The baby was light skinned with scarce blonde hair. Then women came close to the crib one by one in a line each looking at the baby a few seconds. After about 50 women, one of them cried “She looks just like my grandma!” and she fell her knees and sobbed. She was of African complexion.  
  
Momma Joline came beside her and touched her shoulder. She said, “Then she is yours.” The woman looked at Momma with teary eyes and smiled with trembling lips. Momma nodded towards the crib. The woman slowly got up, leaned over the crib and picked up the newborn. She loudly said, “I name her Tamara”. All women cheered and drums were beaten near some huts.  
  
Pauline asked her mom “Why did she take the baby?” Marie said “She is her daughter now. Momma allowed her.” Pauline asked, “Why was she crying?” Momma was nearby and heard it. She came closer and knelt next to Pauline. “Let me tell you her story.” She said.  
  
Momma: Huvei, the girl that was crying, had a brave mom. One day her mom went spear fishing. The sharks attacked her. We couldn’t bring her back. Then, Huvei grandma, Tamara raised her up. Then Tamara passed away this April at 85. Huvei loved her very much.  
Pauline: Is the baby really her grandma?  
Momma: Who knows? Maybe.. \*she smiled  
Pauline: Where did the baby come from?

Momma: Why, a white crane brought her here, of course.  
Momma patted and kissed Pauline on the head and stood up.

Pauline: Where is her mother?

Momma: There she is, holding her right now.  
Momma pointed to Huvei. All women were singing, dancing as musicians played the small string instruments and percussions. They followed Huvei as she took Tamara to her hut, all the while admiring the newborn.

After the celebration, the little girls played pongi, a native game, together where they separated in two teams and had to jump over obstacles put in place by the other team. One of the mothers, Amishka, was watching over them. Pauline loved this game although she was not as good as the older kids. They had a lot of fun and laughed and got exhausted. Later that evening, few hours towards sunset, Amishka, Claire and a few other young moms decided to have a bbq party at the beach.

They gathered at one of the bays facing the sun. The kids continued to play tag on the sand as the mothers lit up a campfire and started prepare the fruits, nuts, vegetables, and fish to be roasted, all the while singing a song:

Ohh mother of our pretty island

With fruits on your skirts

And clouds on your highlands

Once I was small and free

We ate and played happily

Now I must raise my daughters

As good as you took care of me

No matter what I do and say

I can never thank enough thee

So I just wish our daughters

Will take some of your beauty

After about an hour of preparation with coconut waters poured in cups and all-seasoned fish lined on skewers ready for action, Pauline suddenly started running to the West side along the coast. Claire ran after her, “Pauline, slow down!” she yelled. Pauline pointed to the horizon, “Look mama! It is the whale again!”. Indeed Pauline saw the water spraying out of the blowhole of a blue whale half a mile from the shore. Pauline ran into the water. Claire yelled “Wait!” and went after her. “It is going to talk to us Mama” said Pauline. Two weeks ago she had heard sounds while playing in the water and right after that they saw the whale blowing water far in the ocean.

Pauline put her ear into the water. Claire did too. They started to listen. Slowly, the moaning sound of the whale emerged. Claire figured it must be a very old whale. The whale was indeed talking to them and them only. Or maybe only Pauline. They couldn’t make up what the whale said but it sounded compassionate. Pauline felt the whale cared for them and was trying to warn them of something. For Claire, the whale had lot of stories to tell. It was like a song from a distant past. Claire also thought that the whale sounded sad. The whale was grieving for something, but like compassionately, as if giving them condolences. The whale was telling something horrific that had happened in the past and was feeling pity for them. Claire was surprised to find herself crying.

**Part 2: The desert kingdom**

200 years earlier..

Everyone was tense after the incidents that started three weeks ago. Most Christian women started staying home or wearing burkas when outside, yet there were a few that hoped a turban would suffice. It did not. The gangs were attacking any women or men who left any excuse.

Alyssa and Mariam were at their adjacent stands at the bazaar as usual. They were among the prettiest girls in town. Mariam had been here for 11 years. She remembered the days when they used to live underground. Alyssa had moved here 2 years ago. Mariam had black hair and was homely girl. She was very friendly to all the people and liked chatting. Alyssa on the other hand had light brown hair and steel blue eyes and was quiet. She showed little emotion. Before, both allowed their long hairs to flow down to their waists adorned with bright bowties. However, recently they were wearing turbans.

An old man came to get some apples from Mariam. As he was buying he said, “Be very careful. These are dangerous times.” Mariam said, “Yes, but most incidents are happening in the other part of town. Our neighborhood is very friendly.” The man said, “I wouldn’t count on it. The king’s men are going around everywhere. All because of what happened on the other side.” Alyssa said “Why do they punish people here for what happened there?” The man shrugged and said, “Stupid people, what can you do.”

It was a pleasant early summer day. The hustle bustle in the bazaar was still ongoing at other stands, but they sold very few vegetables and fruits. Business was much slower than usual. People who till last month had been their regular customers were staying away from them. They spent all morning just watching people walk around the bazaar.

At some moment towards the afternoon, the sounds of the bazaar seemed to distort at one side. Mariam spotted 5 young men with menacing attitudes walking around the stands. She whispered to Alyssa “They are here.” Alyssa seemed to be unfazed. “I’m amazed how calm you always are.” said Mariam. Then she saw another two men coming from the other side and told Alyssa, “We better get going.” They started collecting the coins from her cash box.

It was too late. Three men had reached their stands and started staring at them; one of them said “Hey, beauty. How much are your apples?” Mariam said, “You can take one for free. I am about to close the stand. Have an appointment.” nervously. Now the rest of the men were showing up. Another man said “But bazaar is not closing yet. You are not closing because of us, are you?” Mariam said “No, no. Of course not. Ok, how many would you like?”

The men approached and surrounded her. “Mmm, they look very juicy”, one of them said. They were staring at her breasts. Mariam said, “Please, do not touch me.” The man said “Really? But we like to touch fruits before taking them.” They grinned to each other like hyenas. Meanwhile two men also surrounded Alyssa. Suddenly, Alyssa pushed one guy aside and started running. The two men took off after her.

Alyssa ran and ran followed by the two men. Down the street she came across a group of young men who watched her curiously. Then one of the two men chasing behind yelled at them “Quick, catch that infidel!” Two of the group joined the chase. Alyssa kept running. She turned a corner and was next to an inn. There were sheds for animals behind it. She swiftly went in the shed and found a place to hide.

Meanwhile the men took Mariam to a nearby house that belonged to someone they knew. They took her to the second story and Mariam begged them to stop, they undressed her. As two men held her, the leader of the mob, who had a big black beard, approached her. He said “Bismillah” and pushed her onto the bed.

**Part 3. The Scavengers**

20 months earlier..

Charlie was excited. He was starting the mission today. All the team was made of youngsters like him in their early 20s. There were a several hot girls among them but he had no time to think of that right now. This was a very important position and all his focus was on performing right.

They were having a meeting in a newly building one-story office. The director, in his 40s, entered the meeting room. “Good-morning, ladies and gentlemen” he said, facing the 15 special mission force members. “We will start the raid in about 40 mins. Samantha, you know what to do right?” Samantha nodded with confidence. “Jessica, you are with James”. Jessica looked at James and smiled. “Charlie, this is your first day. You will find it quite exciting. But beware, this is no game. It could be lethal.” Charlie nodded respectfully. “Patrick here is the man. You can learn a lot from him. He usually doubles everyone else.”

Charlie observed Patrick for a moment. He had curly light brown hair, greenish grey eyes, an athletic body, and an air of self-confident friendliness. He was a winner by all means. Charlie could not help feeling intimidated by this successful young man, although he knew he had to get along with him. Patrick looked back at Charlie for a moment and nodded his head with a smile. He appeared like he was too busy to spend time on pleasing people but did his best not to be rude. “Well, is not that the trait of every truly successful man?” Charlie thought.

The meeting was over in 40 minutes. Unexpected for Charlie, everyone all of a sudden started rushing to put seats in place and getting their gear ready as if they were under fire. Charlie did his best to adapt to this sudden change of tempo. While life was getting back to normal, a group of people was venturing to get back all the technological advances that were lost in the previous decades. This group was seen as the frontier of society and only those qualified were given the chance to join. Now it was Charlie’s turn to prove him worthy.

They all got their gears and started mounting the truck. Charlie watched others to make sure he was taking the right things: backpack, dolly, hammer, hacksaw, flashlight etc. Finally, when all 15 of them were in, the truck driver started the engine. On the way, Charlie looked at his teammates. They all looked very confident. Patrick saw Charlie’s worry. “Don’t worry ma man. It’s easy.” He said. Jessica said, “I think he is worried about the monster.” James looked at Charlie with stern eyes and asked, “Are you?” Charlie said “No, not really. I just want to make sure I do the right thing today.” Samantha said, “Just take whatever you think important. Don’t spend too much time.”

The truck was now outside the city borders. They were approaching to the site of former Austin. It was completely leveled. Even roads were mostly torn off. There were rubbles of buildings here and there. Charlie could barely see the outside from the small windows of the truck. “About the monster, is it true?” he asked. Jessica said, “Yes, it has been confirmed. You can quit if you like. It is not too late.” Patrick said “Come on, Jess, take it easy on him. Don’t worry buddy. None of us encountered it. If you feel anything nearby just go back to the meeting place. You will be fine. Nothing to worry.” Charlie nodded.

The truck stopped. Every one of them got their backpacks ready. The doors opened. “Here we are, guys.” said the driver with a coarse voice. “I will pick you up in half an hour. Stay safe!”. They jumped out of the truck one by one. Two teams of two each were pushing big carts. The rest were divided in 4 groups. Charlie’s team had two others. “Ok, we are taking the West side. Be smart, take mostly electronic stuff. Don’t take heavy stuff. If you sense danger meet me where we will disperse. Come follow me now.” said Charlie’s team leader guy.

They separated from the rest and ran along the rubbles of buildings. They stopped at what looked like a former skyscraper district, as the rubbles were 20-30ft high. Some metal could be seen. “Charlie, you go that way.” said the team leader. Charlie nodded, but couldn’t move after one step. He looked back at the team members. Then he collected his courage and started walking in the direction told. It was a sunny day and noontime. He walked along the rubbles; nothing worthy was to be seen. The only green was from the few trees along the Colorado River near the rubbles. There was way to an old park next to the river.

Charlie tried to imagine the life in such a city. He had never experienced this. The liberation had happened just 10 years ago. Before that, when he was a child, everyone lived in very basic apartments. There were no high rises to be seen.

He took the barely discernable path leading to the riverside. As he approached, plants and grass increased. Soon he started seeing bushes and trees. Finally, when he arrived at the edge of the old park, he saw big oak trees. These provided the first sizeable shades he saw in the city. As everything was in rubbles, all was exposed to the blistering radiation of the sun. He felt better being next to these giant trees.  
  
The park had not been maintained, but had not been demolished either. The trees were all in place. The river provided enough water for them. Charlie started observing the ground. Maybe he could find something here. He went to look at the piles of rubbles next to the park. His eyes caught a small, blue rectangular shape in the dust. He bent down to take it. It was a sim card. Yes, they had shown pics of this in the training. This would get him some credit, he thought. He put the treasure into the backpack.  
  
Right when Charlie got up, he felt the movements of something nearby. He looked around to see nobody. He looked towards the river. Something looked strange. It was as though there was a giant composite glass in front of him. Although he could see through it, there were distortions. He started running back to the meeting spot without looking behind.  
  
He stayed at the meeting place for half hour. When his team came, he told what he saw. “You might have seen some distortions due to the heat.” the team leader told. Charlie was somewhat embarrassed and did not further talk about this during their trip back in the truck.  
  
When they reached the office, they all went to the warehouse. Each scavenger emptied his or her bag. Patrick’s bag was full of computer chips, metal tools, and wires. Charlie took out the sim card. Some teammates couldn’t help giggling. “It’s okay”, said his team leader. “Not bad for first day.”  
  
Everyone later went to the meeting room. The meeting to access the day was to start in 20 mins. Charlie decided to go to the restroom at the other end of the warehouse. He washed his hand and face. At that moment he felt he was being watched. He looked back at the open restroom door and saw no one. He timidly stepped outside. He started walking across the warehouse. As he walked he noticed a strange distortion of view on his left side, again. It was as if there was a glass in front of the wall. “Please, let it be a mirage”, he thought. He turned his head ahead and continued walking, all the while feeling the presence of the beast.  
  
He went to the meeting room and told nobody about what he saw. The meeting was about to start. Jessica was looking at him with playful eyes. He blushed. “I will do as good as Patrick next time” he thought to himself.

**Part 4. The Dragon**

3 months earlier..

Wang and Luo were at their usual stand at the live food market. Luo was busy chopping a dog carcass into pieces while Wang was cleaning the counter from the previous order. There were dogs in cages behind them.

Wang: Did you hear about the steel dragon that bites people’s heads off?

Luo: What is that thing? Never heard.

Wang: One person who saw it told me. He said it landed in a market place and killed nine people in a minute.

Luo looked worried.

Luo: Really?

Wang: Yes. Are you worried?

Luo: No. I don’t believe it. Everything has been normal for the last couple years.

The dogs in the cages started barking suddenly. Luo and Wang looked around worried. Then seeing nothing was happening, scared the dogs by banging sticks on the cages.

Wang: Stupid dogs.

Luo: Don’t worry. There are so many people. Why should the beast come to us?

Wang: I am not worried. I can run very fast. That fat Zhu across from us should worry.

They both laughed.

Later that day, an August evening, after the market was closed, Luo and Wang headed off to their homes from the dirt pathway. They had left the dogs locked at the marketplace. People were carrying their animals back on their carts. Some used donkeys to pull bigger carts. They walked, chatting about the business, how they could buy some new land, and etc. They came to an intersection where Luo departed towards his home.

Wang had another mile to walk. It was getting dark. The green soybean fields next to the road now looked grey. The stars could be seen above. Wang saw a flock of sheep at a distance. They were grazing. He looked around at the big house in the middle of each field. “How did those people get these big lands and houses? Just ten years ago everyone was equal. How did they become rich so fast?”, he thought.

It was all government connection. The liberators had chosen the worst people to govern them. One of the thugs he knew had become governor assistant. However, life was much better than before, so he did not complain much. He was glad his home country was winning against the rest of the world. They would soon punish them all for the decades of humiliation.

Just as he was thinking these he saw an animal run back and forth in the field ahead of him. It looked like a dog. Must be a farm dog, he thought. Then he saw another one. There were two of them. They looked strange. As he approached it appeared like they did not have heads. He came close to a house. They disappeared. He kept walking. He passed the big house, and then saw them again to the side. Now there were three of them. They were light colored and they fur shined under the half moon.

Wang kept walking, trying not to be scared although he was. He did not want to be a sissy. He ignored the weird dogs. He came to a section with trees on both sides. Then, all of a sudden the dogs jumped to the road and ran across to the other side and disappeared behind the trees. He saw it clearly now. The dogs had no heads. He was terrified. He stopped and looked around to spot them again.

He heard a sound and turned to look back. There was nothing. Then when he turned back he saw the three headless dogs standing in front of him. “What do you want!” Wang shouted at them. He took out his stick and waved at them. They jumped back a little. Wang got courage and waved again. Then he heard a growling sound behind him. He wanted to think it is not real but he knew he had to turn back.

He turned back to see a dog with four angry heads some 10 yards away. He got terrified and waved his stick but the animal wouldn’t back off and instead slowly went towards him. “Go away!” he shouted and waved his stick but the heads growled and drooled and looked angrily at him. Just as he walked backwards he bumped into something, something hard. This something worried him more than the monster 6 yards from him. He turned back.

He was right next to a wall, but it looked transparent. Not exactly transparent because the image was distorted, but he could see the houses and trees behind the wall. Confusion overtook his fear. He looked behind to see that the monster was gone, and then looked above at the wall. The distorted image continued all the way, up to.. Up above him, in front of the night sky was an eye looking at him. He watched the eye for what felt like a hundred hours. He was completely perplexed, but then a line appeared under the eye. The line curved to a smile with sharp teeth. He finally realized he was in front of the dragon.

**Part 5: The Silicon Valley**

Another 50 years ago..

Pauline, wearing her work clothes, was stuck in traffic. She was late to cook dinner for the kids. She saw three Tesla cars around her that were self-driving. Envying the drivers that were surfing on their phones worry-free, she thought of when they could buy one of those and keep up with new technology.

Her phone received messages regarding the report they need to submit. She answered her coworker while watching out for police. About half an hour later, she entered home, washed her hands and started prepping the vegetables. Right then she got a message from her whatsapp group.

Judy: I just heard in the news about a new virus. China again. Five people identified \*fearful emoji\*  
Kevin: Again? Only 5 years later?? Wow! I hope it’s not the same.

Stacy: I have a feeling the gov will again wait until the \*poop emoji\* hits the fan..

Pauline quickly checked yahoo.com and saw the news. Having been through Covid-19. She knew what was coming. Quickly she went back to the driveway and drove off with her car to the nearest Walgreens to buy all the sanitizer and alcohols she could get.

When she got there, there were already 30 people in the line. She looked at her watch and realized she has no time, so drove back to her home to continue cooking. “Oh well, we will order online then. We have time.” She thought.

Pauline went back home and started cooking. After dinner was ready, she went to the afterschool to pick up the kids. She came across other parents who were talking about the emerging events. They chatted briefly about what was likely going to happen. This time everyone was better prepared. It should be much smoother. Maybe one month of shelter in place would take care of it. Better get over it fast because kids get really bored at home.

Aaron returned from the restaurant. Pauline saw him and said, “You are back?”. This was a way of saying welcome back. Aaron said “Yep”, in a tired voice. Then he saw the kids and asked them “How was school today?”.

The two boys answered, “It was good.” Then they rushed to get the ipad.  
The younger boy, 9 years old Dave, looked like his dad in body with puffy legs, big hands and feet, a small mouth with a meaty lower lip, oval face, round shoulders, and a big soft buttocks. The older boy, 14 years old Kevin, had more of the body of his mom, lean, cornered shoulders, bony legs and arms, a big mouth with thin lower lip, a flat rear, and small elbows.

Both kids, however, had mixed features as well, which is how we can claim kids are not the exact copies of one of their parents. For instance, both kids had big front teeth, like rabbits, an Asian feature, and both of them had sticking out ears with big lobes, which was a strong genetic feature of Aaron’s father’s side.

Pauline was from Beijing and her original name was Pei Lin. She had big puffy cheeks, which Aaron loved. Like most Northern Chinese, Pauline was tall but still 8 inches less than Aaron. Aaron was from Azerbaijan and his original name was Harun. While Aaron had Middle Eastern features, like thick eyebrows and hairy body, he also looked somewhat Eastern European. This is quite common in Middle East, where the gene pool is the very diverse.

Pauline said, “Did you hear what happened?”. Aaron said, “You mean the virus? Yes. I think people are being paranoid about it since last time”. Pauline said, “Either way we should be prepared”. Aaron said, “Yes, of course. It doesn’t hurt.”

Just then the younger boy started crying. Aaron rushed into the living room to see what happened. He saw Kevin standing with a mean and rebellious face while Dave was whimpering in a curled up position on the floor, holding his tummy. “What happened?” asked Aaron. Dave said with watery eyes “He punched me in the tummy!”. Kevin said, “He hit me first!”. Dave said “Because you didn’t give me the ipad!”.

Aaron told Kevin to go to his room. Then he knelt besides Dave and lifted him up while in a ball position. He put Dave on his lap and said “Listen, you were righteous until you hit him. Once you hit him, now he had the right to hit back. Instead you could have just told us. Always talk to who is in charge. If there is law and order, trust it. If there is no law and order, well that is a different story.”

“Then what?” asked Dave. Then you better be strong. And if you are not, then you better be sneaky. Understand?”  
Dave shook his head in accord.

Dave was more like his dad; mellow, cautious, but slow. Kevin was more like mommy: fast, aggressive, but careless. Then again, these are just adjectives, 64 bit words that cannot do justice to attitudes governed by a network of billions of neurons and a very sophisticated endocrine system that controls hundreds of hormones. These made up the general impression one would gather by looking at them, but what was inside their minds, nobody really knew, including them.

That night Aaron went into his parents’ room. There he was, the man who raised him up, his dear dad, lying on his bed his back slightly raised up. Aaron knelt down besides him. What a wonderful man he was, a saint. Never in his life did Aaron remember seeing any vice in his dad’s eyes. He had lived a life of a true gentleman, an academician who loved his job and nature. Aaron looked at his dad’s cheeks that were swollen with disease now, his ears, his mouth that was like a child’s. His dad, in his deathbed, had managed to keep his innocence, looking with fixed eyes at the dresser in front.  
  
Aaron took the swollen hand of his dad in his own, that big hand that used to pet him on the head when he was little. Ohh how he loved him. Tears started filling his eyes. “Father”, he said, “forgive me...”.  
  
His father continued to look ahead. He could barely move. But he lifted his other hand and said “Why should I forgive you?”, and made a gesture with his other hand. Aaron, with a quivering voice said, “I couldn’t make you proud..”. His dad, with an assertive voice said “We had a wonderful life..!” but his voice broke off towards the end. Tears started running down his dad’s eyes. Then added again “Wonderful..” with a trembling voice.  
  
Aaron was now crying and said “We will have more..” with difficulty as tears were running down his face. Then he put his face against his dad’s big hand..  
  
Just then he woke up. It was 3 in the morning. He had been seeing these dreams since his father passed away 6 years ago. He got up, put on two coats and went outside of the building to smoke. His dad would have hated to see him smoke. But would it matter now? He was gone. He had failed him and nothing could change that now. He was now just a slave of this life. But it was a life worth being a slave for. “If we are to die anyway, why not die trying the best to support your loved ones?” he thought. This gave him comfort.  
  
Then he thought of how his dad would not do much housework and that he was doing that at least. Then he told himself “You fool! That generation was like that. You are just trying to make an excuse for yourself. There is no excuse! You failed him and you will live with this guilt the rest of your life! Now be a man and work until you die!” He felt better after thinking that way. After all, we had many people in our minds, just like Freud said, and when he blamed the “other” in his mind, he felt better, although deep down he knew they were one and the same.

Aaron went to the living room and studied Quantum Computing until morning. Occupying his mind with something else eased his pain. At 8 the kids woke up and went straight for the ipad. His wife woke up next. He loved to see her right after getting up, with messy hair. She looked so innocent and cute. He didn’t enjoy seeing her while she worked when she looked like a typical tiger mom.

He got up and gave her a hug and kissed her on her soft cheeks. He loved pressing his lips on her puffy cheeks. It made him feel at home. He would open his eyes and look at her eyes from that close. He found her to be the most beautiful from this angle. The ratios were all absurd and his vision was blurry, but he liked it. Which one was her real appearance? From 6 ft or 4 inches? Both, he thought. We only see what our eyes receive. The actual measurements did not matter. In the end, Aaron learned not to question it. He loved her because he did. To ask why would be absurd. The reason did not matter compared to the result.

Being an engineer also made him round things up. Unlike scientists, engineers can accept an imperfect square as a square. They had to make a decision at some point. Once they made, they had to stick with it too. Thus, when he found he loved his wife he decided to marry her. He held his family above everything. He gave up his other dreams and became a happy house bound.

His wife smiled as Aaron kissed. Then she asked, “Did you see the news?”

Aaron said “No”.  
Pauline: You didn’t? They declared shelter in place.

Aaron: So, we are closing the restaurant?  
Pauline: Yes. I will talk with Steve.  
Aaron: I guess we have to clear the fridges starting today.

After the great recession, Aaron had lost his job as a manufacturing engineer. After several years of struggle, him and his wife’s friend had opened a restaurant, which kept him busy after that. They had to close the restaurant before for Covid-19, so they knew what to do. Pauline, being very capable, was also helping manage the restaurant in addition to her full time high tech job.

The next two weeks were a repeat of 5 years ago. Schools closed. Most people started working from home. They were able to contain it this time. Global infected number remained at 80,000 in two weeks. Pauline was working from home and trying to keep kids busy. Online, people were making jokes about China:  
“What did they eat this time? Cockroaches?”  
“Can we call it the Chingchong virus?”

“It started in Jilin province this time, so maybe Jilin virus.”  
Pauline took the jokes in stride. “You get to learn some geography this way” she wrote.

This time something didn’t seem right. Although they took measures early on, the cases kept going up. Inside the WHO, doctors leading the analysis were discussing:

Dr. Hart: Are you sure about this?  
Dr. Lee: Yes. We observed that the virus could hide for 2 months.

Dr. Hart: Are you telling me that this is a provirus.

Dr. Lee: Apparently.. It is rather scary

Aaron, Pauline, Dave, and Kevin sat down for breakfast and turned on the TV. Local news showed some Chinese restaurants being stoned. Not many, about 5-6 in the entire USA.

Pauline: Do you think they would attack me in Central Valley?  
Aaron: Could happen. Lot of boneheads there. But I think it will stay low profile.  
Pauline: Trump Jr. called it Chinese virus like his father.  
Aaron: They just say stuff to get votes. They know they can get away with that now. I don’t think there can be racism like before. People are very mixed. Before it was like cutting off the rotten part off a peach. Now the whole peach is like rotten, like a frozen peach. They would have to cut everything up to the seed.  
Pauline sarcastically asked “Are you telling we are the rotten part?”  
Aaron replied with a grin “No, of course not. They are. Then again, you guys are the ones eating everything.  
Pauline: Like you don’t eat meat.  
Aaron: I do, but what’s up with torturing animals before they eat them?  
Pauline: I don’t do that. But they cut the throat of cows and sheep in Middle East. That’s torture too.  
Aaron: They do that as respect to the animal. It is still torture of course. Isn’t human being like that? They only look at the evil and mistakes of others. Actually we all do evil things and we all make mistakes. Even vegetarians farm the lands taken from wildlife. There is no escape from the selfish evil we all have within.  
Pauline pretended not to hear Aaron’s yet another rant about the human race. There were too many negative things already.

﻿Dr. Hart: What do we know so far?  
Dr. Lee: This is a provirus and it can even infect bacteria.  
Dr. Hart: It is pro alright. Damn virus. How can it infect bacteria and what are the implications of that?  
Dr. Lee: It is a bacteriophage and can infect e-coli. This is low probability since it does not get past the stomach acids usually, but we observed some rare cases.  
Dr. Hart: So, if it gets into bacteria and they are later discharged with the stool..  
Dr. Lee: They can live in the sewer with e-coli.  
Dr. Hart: And so it won’t go away.. Smart.  
Dr. Lee: Too smart for a natural virus.  
Dr. Hart: So you suggest that?  
Dr. Lee: Yes, this is a biological weapon.  
Dr. Hart: Do we tell this to authorities?  
Dr. Lee: I think so. What do you think?  
Dr. Hart: I will talk with WHO directors.

In another office somewhere else in the world, there was another meeting. A man in his 50s, in grey suit was speaking to a group of men in their 40s through 80s around an expensive mahogany table:  
Gentlemen, the results are close to what we predicted.  
An older man in his 60s with a big belly and glasses asked: What is the next step?  
Speaker: We will wait. It will take some time to develop the second agent.  
Older man: Are we in any danger?  
Speaker: No, because we all have the antibodies ready and all of you have been vaccinated.  
Older man: What can we get out of this?  
Speaker: Another recession is coming. It is your chance to grab more land.

Older man: With what money? My stocks have been hurt.

Speaker: We will start selling the vaccine.

Older man: Well hurry up already.

﻿The next day Aaron went to the restaurant to do cleaning. He wiped around for hours, but he felt a chest pain and felt dizzy. He went back home around 5pm. He was feeling bad and told his wife he might be sick. He heated up a piece of bread and poured a cup of water. He went to the bedroom with them and locked the door. Pauline was going to sleep with the kids.

Next day he was feeling worse. His wife knocked on the door and asked how he is. He told her to bring some food and water, but wear a mask when coming in. He urged her to leave the room immediately after leaving the tray next to the door. He spent the daytime in bed while taking Acetaminophen. The fever was reduced but chest pain intensified.  
Towards dinner, he could hardly get out of bed, but he did. He unlocked the door, then texted his wife. He asked Pauline to come in the room with the kids, wearing a mask. He also put a mask on. When they came, he told them, while hardly breathing “I want one thing from you. Stay safe. Do you understand?”.

The kids nodded their heads. Pauline was crying. She said she called the doctor. No one was available. Aaron said, “It is okay. Nothing to do. If I make it I make it, otherwise do not feel bad for me.”

Then he told Pauline “Can I talk alone with Kevin?”. Pauline nodded and took Dave outside. Aaron took out a piece of paper from under the quilt. He said, “Read this when you are 18. Do not show your mom or anyone else. And wash your hands after putting it in a safe place. Okay?”

Kevin said, “Okay dad” in a weak voice.  
Aaron: Now leave and close the door. I love you all.

That night Aaron passed away. Pauline called the hospital for them to pick up his body. He would be cremated per his will.

In a year after the pandemic, the vaccine was found, or, rather, released by the secret group. They made billions of dollars off it. All people around the world were vaccinated. The virus was discovered to infect bacteria, but it actually was not a provirus for humans. How and why it could infect both humans and bacteria could not be answered. The doctors leading the pandemic, Dr. Hart and Dr. Lee, had both died from the virus. People suspected they got contracted in their laboratory.

**Part 6: College years**

The next ten years was spent with recovering from the pandemic. Pauline raised the kids herself. They sold the restaurant shares. She bought a house in a better school district. She did not sell the old house as they had many memories there. They gave it to rent. After kids went to college Pauline sold the second house and bought a small condo in Irvine, where she enjoyed a peaceful retirement. She continued to send a monthly stipend to her sons and they visited her two to three times a year.  
  
They worked hard. Kevin studied robotics at Stanford. Dave finished high school in good standing and got admitted to Berkeley for computer science. Pauline continued to work in her company.

Kevin read his father’s note when he turned 18. He never talked a word about it to anyone. After graduating from school at 22 he went to work for Boston Robotics as a Junior Engineer. He had a group of engineer friends he hung out with.

Dave was working at a restaurant part-time. He had a rough middle school period where he got bullied a lot. This made him tough but left him with a resentment towards society. Kevin was worried about him. He protected his little brother as much as he could. He knew Dave had plans to get revenge from his bullies one day. His revenge gene was very pronounced.

﻿While Dave was 20 and Kevin was 25, Dave lived in Berkeley but stayed at Kevin’s apartment in Mountain View during some weekends.

Kevin: Dave, I know you want to take revenge, but you have to let go of the past man. Those aholes are not around you any more. They all went to colleges around the country.

Dave: I cannot. It bugs me everyday.  
Kevin: Okay you had a rough middle and high school period, but so did many others. I understand they insulted you, but insulting is not a crime. You have to have a thick skin.  
Dave: They also physically attacked me. Nobody did anything about it.  
Kevin: All you had to do was report them to the school principal. You didn’t.  
Dave: Yeah like they wouldn’t label me as coward then.  
Kevin: So what? You are being silly. You think those guys weren’t cowards? They only attacked you when they were 3 or more, right? Look, we went to really good schools. Those kids were all from rich families. You think they were as tough as they looked? They were all cowards!  
Dave: And that pisses me off even more. They had everything yet they were still mean.  
Kevin: We can all be mean sometimes. Like you were never mean. I remember you shunned that kid who wanted to be your friend in 8th grade. That is an insult too.  
Dave: That is not the same thing.  
Kevin: Well then what are you going to do? Go beat them? Then you will be punished by law.  
Dave: I can’t be happy without getting a revenge.  
Kevin: Whatever Dave, I told you my opinion. You are a big man now. You decide for yourself.

Dave didn’t like these conversations. He felt Kevin did not take him and his pain seriously. He had anger in his heart, as though his teenage angst was just coming out, being delayed by the incidents during high school years. He felt the authorities failed him. Their mom gave them some money every month, but Dave still worked in a restaurant to prove he was grown up and could earn his own money.  
  
While there, he made friends with a guy called Mike. He told Mike he wanted to make extra money. Mike told him he could be selling dope in Berkeley. Dave started selling powder to students on campus. An early spring day, Mike asked him to go to Oakland to pick up the material. He knocked on the door of the loft. A big guy opened it. He said “come on in boy”. He went in and saw some 8-9 people chatting. There were 3 women and the rest were gang members apparently. Mike saw him and said “Hey wassup brother? Let me introduce you to the crew. Then he introduced Dave to each person while standing in the middle of the loft. Some saluted by raising their beers, some by nodding, some said “wassup brotha”. They looked like fine crew and everyone was minding their own business.

Mike said “Let me take you to the back show you something. They went to a small room in the back with windows blacked out. There was a table full of guns. Mike said “Hows that? Cool stuff eh?” Dave said “Yeah nice stuff.” Mike then took him back to the living room. He said “Have a seat on the sofa.”. Dave felt awkward there. He grew up in good neighborhoods. He wasn’t used to such company. He had a couple awkward conversations with people around. Mike noticed it isn’t working, so asked him to take the product and sent him off. Dave heard some laughter right after the door closed behind him.

When he met Mike next time, Mike said “You okay man. Don’t worry bout those guys. They are cool. That big guy is Big Josh. Just be under the radar for him alright?”. Dave said “Ok”.

Later that weekend Dave went to Kevin’s apartment. “How is everything at school?” Asked Kevin. Dave said “It’s okay. I got B’s.”. Kevin said “You can do better than that.”. Dave didn’t want to hear another lecture from his older brother. He saw some machine parts on Kevin’s work table, asked “What are those?”. “Some project I am working on, it is confidential. I can’t tell you.” Said Kevin. Dave felt he was treated like kid again.

The following weekends, when Dave was in the apartment, he studied the parts when Kevin was away. He made sure to put them back in place to avoid Kevin suspecting.

Dave was working at a buffet restaurant. One day two reckless guys came in. They were talking and laughing loudly. They started taking food from the buffet, but they were spilling it around the floor. Dave cleaned after them. They sat down and ate and made a mess while eating. Before they finished their plates they got second rounds and put the new plates on top of the old ones. That way 5-6 plates with food piled up. Dave didn’t want to refill their drinks.

At one moment one guy deliberately dropped a plate full of food on the carpet floor. Then he yelled at Dave, “Hey! Look here!” then he pointed to the mess “Clean this stuff up!”. Dave was angry but held himself. He got a broom and dust pan. Right when he was cleaning, one of the guys said “Hey mofo, you didn’t fill our drinks for half hour.” The other one was looking angrily at him too. Dave said “You can’t go for seconds until you finish the first. It is posted on the wall.” The other guy said “Btch I will slap you. You shut your mouth up you fag!”. Dave said “Go ahead sob”. The guy got up fast, just then the manager came and said “Wo wo wo what’s happening? Sir, you two please leave before I call police. We won’t charge you.”. The two guys left while shouting “F y’all!! F this place!!”  
  
After they left the manager told Dave: “Look, there are all kinds of people in this world. You can have a giant cockroach-man walk in here too. What do you do then? We can’t ask him to leave. The best is to keep all confrontation minimal. Sometimes we just have to suck it up. That is our industry.” Then he added, “I can’t let you keep working here man. It is for your safety too. I don’t want those guys coming back and doing stuff to you. You better leave at the end of today.” Dave nodded.

﻿Dave met Mike 3 days later.  
Mike: It was Big Josh’s men. They just wanted to mess with you a little. Pretend you didn’t learn this okay?  
Dave: Why the hell would he do that to me? I barely met him!  
Mike: Look man, he is the boss. He just wanted to have some fun. Just ignore it, okay?  
Dave: Okay

In August, Kevin went to Boston for three weeks for training. He left the apartment to Dave. The machine parts were still there and Dave studied them day and night. Towards the end of the three weeks, Mike told Dave they were throwing a party in LA and asked him to come join. “You’ll get to see the big shots man. They cool guys. We got coke and chicks. You can help out with the dishes and stuff. I will pay you.”

Dave agreed to go. That night he packed a small backpack. He threw in 3 of the robots. They drove south together with Mike.  
Dave: Anyone else coming from Bay Area.  
Mike: Yeah. Big Josh will be there. Listen, just pretend you don’t know him, okay? He will ignore you.  
Dave: Alright

They reached LA at night and parked in a shaggy neighborhood. Mike told him to bring his stuff. They knocked on the door of a two-story house. Door opened, with marijuana smoke rushing out. “Ohh the Norcal boys!!” yelled someone. Loud cheering was heard. There were about 18 people in there. Dave just followed Mike, his backpack on his shoulder.

﻿Heavy smoke in the room. Loud rap music playing. Two men were on the sofa playing xbox, five other were around the table drinking. One was washing the dishes. All members of the notorious gang, Purple Pimps.

Much of the party Dave prepared dishes and mixed drinks. Nobody bothered him, though at times he would see Big Josh talk with others while they gave him quick looks. The party was over around 3am. Only Mike, Big Josh, Nasty Raynes, Sneaky Steve, Lil Nash and two other were left.

Lil Nash: Man that last hit was dope.  
Nasty Raynes: Y’all thank me for that one.  
Big Josh: Shut da f up ya thrash. Without me yo ass was r.. by that mofo.  
\*Three guys giggled.  
  
Lil Nash: Man yestaday I saw this green boy in the street. Asked his cash. He gave it, but I still kicked his ass. The btch was cryin hard man \*laughs  
Sneaky Steve: Ya like you got chased away by that skinny Indian dude.  
\*More giggling  
Lil Nash: F u man  
  
Nasty Raynes, with a lowered voice: Talking bout fags, that guy right there is one.  
“He was pointing at the guy washing dishes.

Lil Nash: He looking soft

Nasty Raynes: Where’d you get this guy?

Money Mike: He worked in a resto I went. He wanted some cash. I use him as bagger.

Big Josh: He looks fag. Let’s f with this guy.

Lil Nash: Yeah let’s put him in a doggy suit and f him \*laughs

Big Josh: Lemme handle this sob. Watch me.

\*Big Josh turned side on his seat towards the dishwasher. With raised voice:

Big Josh: He ma man. Wassup!

Dishwasher guy turned around, said “Hey”.

\*Four of the guys laughed. Big Josh didn’t.

Big Josh: Wass ur name?

Dishwasher: David

Big Josh: Hey David, u ever scked ck?

\*Others laughed

David: No haven’t. I don’t do that stuff.

Big Josh looked at others and grinned for a moment. Then continued.

Big Josh: Why not?

David: Not my thing

Big Josh: I don’t think so. You haven’t tasted mine yet.

David paused

Lil Nash: Yeah, you will like his. Would fit in ur mouth real good.

David: F u man

Big Josh: What u say? \*his voice sounded serious

David: I said f him. And f u too.

Big Josh: Oh yea pretty boy. You wanna f with me?

David suddenly changed from a shy guy to very confident.

David: Mofo I can f 10 of u same time.

Big Josh reached out to his pocket and took out a knife.

Big Josh: B you dead now.

David was looking straight at him, not blinking.

David: You mean like this?

Big Josh was confused with that answer but then looked down and said “what the hell wa..”

Before he could finish, Big Josh gave a painful shout “aaahhh”.

He held his pants, something seemed to be moving there. Then he bent to the front holding his stomach and shortly after collapsed to the floor.

Nasty Raynes stood up and shouted: “Big what happened?!!”

Sneaky Steve stood up and turned to David.

Sneaky Steve: You sob u f..ed now.

Sneaky Steve and Lil Nash pulled out guns, but right then both looked down to their pants and shortly after both collapsed in similar fashion to Big Josh.

Nasty Raynes: You bastard! He jumped aside while pulling out a gun and took refuge behind a sofa. By now the guys on the sofa had been alarmed and took out guns too. Mike was watching fearfully behind the table.

David jumped behind the kitchen prep counter just as the three men fired their guns. Cups and plates started being shattered with gun shots.

Right then Nasty Raynes shouted “aahhh” and collapsed. Then one of the other guys. And then the next one.

Only Mike was left. He had his hand in his pocket.

David emerged from back of the counter. Dusted his pants and clothes. Looked at Mike.

David: Throw that gun to the floor boss.

Money Mike complied. David then looked around. Then walked out like nothing happened.

In few hours, police had the place cordoned. Fbi and local police was at the scene.  
  
Detective: Found anything?  
Csi tech: There were 8 ppl here. We know all these guys.  
Detective how did they die? Gunshot?  
Csi tech: Nope. They got penetrated by something. It wasn’t a knife or bullet.  
Detective: What does that mean?  
Csi tech: We don’t know. But looked like a machine wound to me.  
Detective: Who were the other two?  
Csi tech: One was like Money Mike. The other one, we couldn’t find out.  
Detective: Alright, at least someone took out these aholes. We will just wait for his next move.  
Csi tech: Yep  
  
Money Mike was in hiding. He didn’t plan to get help. He would probably do some other job for a while.

Dave went back to Bay Area to Kevin’s apt next morning using a craigslist ride share. Kevin was coming in two days. He took a shower and slept. He stayed there until Kevin was back.

﻿Kevin came back, looking tired. He found Dave sitting on the sofa watching his cell phone. “Hey Dave, how are you?” he said. “I am alright. Welcome back.” said Dave in a lazy voice. “I got some food for you if you want to eat.” He got up to heat up a stew for him.  
 They had dinner together.  
 Kevin: How is school Dave?  
 Dave: It’s good. I have mostly A and Bs.  
 Kevin: You should work harder. That is how we were raised. We need to do our best.  
 Dave: Yeah I had a little rough patch. I will focus better next term.  
 Next day Kevin went to work. Summer break wasn’t over yet so Dave was still there. Next day they had dinner again together.  
 Kevin: Did you read that gang murder in LA?  
 Dave: Yeah. It’s what they always do, right?  
 Kevin: They do. But the strange thing here is how they were murdered. It says being penetrated by some sharp object, but not exactly knife.  
 Dave: Maybe a spear or somethin?  
 Kevin: The report says something entered through their belly and left from their neck. Almost all victims died this way except one who was bitten on the neck initially.  
 Dave: Interesting..  
 Kevin: Also, I found scratch marks on the snakes.  
 Dave: What snakes?  
 Kevin: Cmon bro. Stop playin. Why did you do this?  
 Dave gave a sigh. “They messed with me.”  
 Kevin: Who messed with you? Why were you there?  
 Dave: I was invited to the party.  
 Kevin: What on earth were you doing at a gang party?  
 Dave: I was.. sellin stuff to get in.  
 Kevin: Brother brother brother.. you just can’t let go right? What did you get by killing those cockroaches? Made you feel like you punished the evil? Why do you think they are evil?  
 Dave: They sell drugs. They beat and harass people.  
 Kevin: But you sold drugs too. So you are evil too now?  
 Dave: I did it because of spite.  
 Kevin: Maybe they did too. Look brother, you think they are uncivilized and filthy human beings. But you think those who are civilized are much different? Like those kids that bullied you, maybe some became vegetarians, maybe some became teachers, even priests. Are they good now?  
 Dave couldn’t answer.  
 Kevin: Did you whack all of them at least? Did you leave any witness?  
 Dave: I spared one. He was my friend.  
 Kevin shook his head side to side.  
 Kevin: F..k. If you are going to do something bad you have to all the way man! How can you leave one behind? What if he comes after you?!!  
 Dave was surprised. He didn’t expect Kevin, who represented a righteous, virtuous man to him, talk like this.  
 Dave: He.. was not one of them.  
 Kevin: One of who Dave? One of the ones teasing you? Wasn’t he one of the gang? Didn’t he do all those bad things too? So what did these people do to you man? Did they insult you? Did they tease you?  
 Dave: One told I could suck him.  
 Kevin: Then just laugh at him. You take people too seriously man. Let me tell you, people do bad stuff for three main reasons: first, they got insulted for some reason, second, they need to do it, third, they are f..kin idiots and want to have fun. Maybe he misunderstood you ignoring him as an insult. Word of advice to you, treat especially disenfranchised people with respect and never show you are afraid of them, because if they think you respect them from fear they will take that as an insult too.  
 Kevin continued: So, you exterminated 6 idiots. No big deal. No one will question it. Police doesn’t care about such people. And the idiot that escaped will be too scared to do anything. These people are not one-tenth as though as they look. What I am upset is your attitude. Be cool man! Why do you waste time with idiots? Let me tell you, the moment I realized we are living on the planet of the apes, everything started to make sense to me. Play their game! We are all primates brother, like it or not!  
 Dave: I know what you mean, but there are some people that are just evil.  
 Kevin: That is your perception. What is evil? We all have a bunch of instincts that move us. Some will tell you swearing is evil. Now are we evil to say fuck that? Sometimes we feel like saying that don’t we? But that might be offensive for someone else. Do you agree?  
 Dave: But that’s apples to oranges. Hurting someone without reason is evil.  
 Kevin: You say? Okay, if you didn’t eat meat, could you survive? Yes? But we eat meat almost every day. Aren’t we hurting the animals by eating them? What’s your reason? They taste good.  
 Dave: You have a point there..  
 Kevin: Look brother, I know what you want. You would like a world where everyone respects each other, everyone is responsible and cares about the environment. I understand. What you want is a civilized world. But here is the thing. Aside from the cost of civilization, which I won’t get into, human is simply not made for civilization itself. We are still monkeys brother, monkeys!  
 Dave showed a pitiful smile.  
 Kevin continued: Take the example of eating meat. You know it is bad, yet you have that instinct, that taste bud that you cannot resist. Yes? Then humans will never reach true civilization. It will always be half ass like this. But do you know what the real problem is?  
 Dave: What?  
 Kevin: It is technology. The fact that these apes possess technology is the main problem. As long as humans have access to technology, the world will be in trouble. Imagine we were in stone age. The amount of destruction would be much less.  
 Dave: True that  
 Kevin: Okay. Enough talking. Just going to advice you, read Freud. Also, read The Dark Forest. You will like it. Now, have you ever wondered why I left confidential robot snakes lying around like that?  
 Dave: You devil!  
 Kevin: Yep. I had it all figured out. Haha. Anyway we have some work to do. I am going to talk you the details.

**Part 7: The startup**

﻿Kevin and Dave went to a business park near Google headquarters. There were several small businesses in there like injection molders, electronics repair shops, and etc. They came to the front of one of the doors on a long white one-story building. Kevin took out a key and opened the door. They went in through a lobby. Apparently nobody was in the front.  
  
They opened the door to what looked like a workshop, but it was dark inside. Dave only saw two dozen rectangular lights and quickly noticed they were from VR headsets. He heard talking “Jason, are you in there?”, “Yes, I am now about to break the floor. Watch out.”, “We are being attacked! Get your shields!”. Kevin looked at Dave and grinned. “Guys!”, Kevin said. Suddenly the VRs stopped moving. “Is it time already?” someone asked. Kevin said “Yes, we have been waiting for five minutes.”.  
  
Someone got up and turned on the lights. There were about two dozen people on chairs. They were all wearing some costumes that looked like Minecraft skins. One was like a shark, another pacman, there was homer simpson, and rainbow dash, one was like a warrior, another one superman etc. They all took the headsets off their heads and put on the floor. “Everyone in their place!” someone shouted. They all moved their chairs in four rows. In the front row were the shark, super mario bro, pikachu, homer, giant ant, and swordsman.

They were sitting facing Kevin and Dave, who were standing. “So, this is your famous brother?” asked the shark. Kevin replied, “Yes. This is Dave. He is an AI expert”. Mario bro said “Don’t be shy, Dave. You are in good company.” Dave said “Thanks. I’m sure my brother wouldn’t hangout with idiots”. They all laughed, a little out of politeness. “So, you want to join our group, Dave?” asked the shark. Kevin said “Actually I invited him. You will like him”. The seated ones looked at each other and nodded.

“We are very selective on who we bring in. Being Kevin’s brother, you have priority, but that does not mean your acceptance is automatic.” said the antman. Kevin said “Well let’s do the demonstration then”. They nodded in okay.

Dave took out the robo-snake from his bag. “That’s our Toni”, said someone. Kevin said “Yes. But you will be amazed how he trained it”. Dave started whispering something to Toni, then he left it on the floor. Toni started crawling towards the jury. Then he went to antman, got up his chair and put its head into his pocket. Antman got nervous.  
  
“Don’t worry. It’s not going to bite you” said Dave. Toni picked up Antman’s keys, crawled back to Dave and gave him the keys. “Good job Toni” said Dave. All judges looked at each and nodded in approval.  
  
Shark stood up and shouted “I declare you one of the Xbots!”. Then everyone else stood u, took off their masks, and started making gorilla sounds. They sure looked like a silly bunch. Kevin walked Dave to the group to introduce the members, each a successful geek in his own right.

Shark was Jason. He was tall and had short brown curly hair, small nose, greenish brown eyes, and glasses. He was Kevin’s classmate. He was athletic, energetic, articulate, astute, and assertive. There was certain cockiness to him, something common with smart American kids of Silicon Valley. Dave was not bothered by it. Jason seemed like a great leader.

Homer was Mark. He was also tall but plump, had a big head, short straight dirty blond hair and blue eyes. He was from Carnegie Mellon computer science. He was quite a mellow guy, with a smile of his face that seemed to be in its own digital world. Apparently Mark was in charge of the technical side of things, or so thought Dave as he could not conceive of Mark doing anything else.

Pikachu was Peter. He was medium height, skinny, and blond. He was a top student from MIT. He looked like a hardworking and down-to-the-earth guy. He was a little timid, which Dave wondered why given his outstanding talent in studying. Maybe he did not have much time to prove himself in other fields.

George the Antman was from Yale and had straight brown hair. He was a little younger than others, a year older than Dave. The only person Dave felt quirky about was George. He seemed so cheerful and energetic, yet he felt his conversation was rather superficial. He seemed to be acting. Then again, it could be that he was an introvert like many coders and being outside his comfort zone made him act quirky. It was okay. Dave would rather work with quirky smart guys than morons with huge egos that made them think they were superstars. At least none of these guys would talk down to Dave, or so he felt.

Super Mario was Adam and Swordsman was James. They were also very friendly and were leaders of their own groups. Dave would be working with Adam to start with. Adam did not waste time with much chit-chat and got straight to the point on how the fraternity worked. Yes, there were two girls in the fraternity too: Nicole and Jessica. They were also from top schools and awesome coders. Everyone Dave met seemed to focused on the grand task, which was essentially developing an AGI, a subject that occupied all computer scientists in the last 2 decades. The Xbots were the frontrunner under the radar.

Two years later, the group of rich people were having a meeting again, this time in a country club overlooking a golf course.  
  
 Man sitting on a baroque style seat: You promised us three things. It has been decades. Not one of them has been fulfilled yet!  
 Speaker: Gentleman, yes we have not completed the studies, but we have made big progress in all three.  
 Second seated man: When are you going to complete them? After we are all dead?  
 Speaker: Gentlemen, we are doing our best to keep you all healthy. As you see our gene therapy has saved you from your chronic illness. Only Mr. Rotschild senior is no longer with us, but he was 93, not a bad age compared to average lifespan of Americans.  
 Second seated man: Average American?? Are you comparing us with average?  
 Speaker: I told that to show the big difference. We will do our best to extend your lives gentlemen. But the projects we are talking about can traverse human lives. These are major breakthroughs. The first project, we are almost there, just waiting for the third one to be completed. The second project is going in full force. The third one.. that is why I called you here.  
 First seated man: Let’s see what you got.  
 The 12 men in the room groaned.  
 Speaker made a sign to his assistant. The assistant went to open a door in the back. In came Kevin and two others, followed by a robot.  
 Speaker: Gentlemen, introducing to you the new Robot Galileo!  
 The speaker turned to Kevin and asked “So, what can this robot do?”  
 Kevin: It can easily understand commands. It can carry load and walk for 15 hours with battery. It can also figure out how to operate things.  
 Speaker: Okay then, let’s have a demonstration! Galileo, can you bring me a cup of water?  
 Galileo: Yes sir!  
 Galileo looked around. It saw a pitcher of water on one table and upside down cups on another one. It went to get a cup first and then went to pick up the pitcher and poured a cup of water and took the cup to the speaker.  
 The speaker took the cup with an exaggerated gesture and showed it to the audience.  
 He said “Gentlemen, cheers!” Then he lifted it up and drank the water.  
 First seated man: This is it? That is why you called us for, this toy?  
 Second seated man: This is rubbish. I am leaving.  
 Everyone started getting up and leave, giving mocking looks at the speaker.  
 Speaker was upset. He looked at Kevin in disappointment “Don’t you guys have something better?”.  
 Kevin: Boston Robotics does not, but I can find something. Would you be interested?  
 Speaker: Most definitely

﻿Kevin and Dave entered the warehouse they were renting. There were 10 other engineers inside, working on metal parts and wires, wearing safety glasses. The guys saluted each other.  
  
 Kevin: How is it coming along?  
 Jason: It’s getting there. Probably in 4 weeks we can assemble it.  
 Dave went to the software guy and talked with him. The prototype was almost ready. These were Kevin’s friends from Boston Robotics. They had quit to join the startup.  
  
 In 4 weeks Kevin, Dave, and Jason, with the robot next to them, were standing at the lobby of an office building in Livermore. The robot was carrying a TV box. Two guards came and opened the door for them. They all went in.  
  
 They went into a big conference room, unusually big for office buildings in this area. It was well lit with induction lighting too. In the meeting room the waited 10 mins before Ted Splinsky, the speaker, entered.  
 Ted: Alright guys, I am pretty busy, so let’s cut to the chase and see what you have got.  
 Kevin: This is Next. He can do many things, like construction.  
 Ted: Show me.  
 Kevin: Next, could you install this TV on that wall please?  
 Next said “Ok, but I might need some help.” It left the box on the meeting table. Opened the tape. Took out the TV. Put it aside. Took out the installation kit. Then opened the manual and read through it. Then went to the wall and got ready to drill, but stopped. Turned its head back and looked at Ted. Kevin looked at Ted, and Ted nodded up in approval.  
 Next then completed all the brackets and wires, and then said “Now I need your help carrying the TV”. Dave helped it carry it to the bracket. The installation went well. They gave the remote to Ted. Ted turned on the TV. It worked.  
 Ted: Impressive  
 Kevin: This is just a prototype. We can develop this way further. We need funding.  
 Ted: How much?  
 Kevin: About 500 million  
 Ted: I can give you 60 to show initial results. Then we can continue second and third rounds.  
 Kevin: We can work with that. Thank you sir!

**Part 8: Visit to Irvine**

Three months later, they had rented a big office building and hired 53 more employees. They were doing a kickoff party. Everyone was gathered in the office where cubicles were and were drinking, eating. and chatting with loud music in the air.  
  
 Kevin raised his hands and walked to the middle of them. He said “Everyone, please look here for a second.”  
 Kevin: Guys, I can’t express how excited I am to have assembled the team that is going to change the future!  
 Cheers and whistles followed.  
 Kevin: This is a pivotal moment in human history! Everything from now on depends on how we party tonight! So let’s get to it!  
 Everyone cheered loudly and started dancing wildly. Dave was enjoying this, but wanted to take a break. He went into one of the meeting rooms and checked his cell phone. He was so excited that he wanted to start to work right away.  
 Just then the company’s 50 year old administrative assistant walked in. She closed the door behind her and closed the shades of the window.  
 “I have a surprise for you.” she said, sat on the table, and kicked her shoes off.

﻿Two months after the launch, they went to Irvine to visit Pauline. She looked older now, with vertical wrinkles between her eyes and white hair now evenly sprinkled between her black hair.  
  
 She hugged and kissed her sons, and told them she was proud of them both. She told them how she went to Laguna Beach to take walks and sometimes do paintings in her condo. She did not need much, just a peaceful life and knowing that her sons were safe.  
  
 They stayed there for 2 days. They cooked and ate together, chatted about old days. Pauline said “Your dad treated me very good all the time. Just sometimes he could be very negative. But I still love him.” Then she looked at the setting sun as if to look at the horizon on the ocean where Aaron’s ashes were scattered.  
  
 It had been 12 years. Time passed so fast. Life was but a minute. But moments like this lasted forever. It was September, they were sitting at the patio, and the evening breeze in SoCal was still warm, but it did make them shiver. Maybe it was the breeze of time that made them shiver as it flowed by.  
  
 Pauline went to the kitchen and started washing the dishes. They were quiet for a while, then Kevin suddenly turned to Dave and said “Do you remember our father’s last moments?”. Dave said “Yes, very clearly.”  
 Kevin: Well, something happened that you did not know. Dad gave me a piece of paper.  
 Dave looked curiously at Kevin.  
 Kevin continued: There were instructions to access his files on his laptop. He had some ideas about business. Also, about research. In particular, he wrote about the way to achieve General Artificial Intelligence. The main idea is, the current research focuses too much on architecture. The current computation speed and network capabilities are sufficient, but the missing ingredient is training data. That has to be manually generated. We have to teach the computer one example at a time how to perform intermediate reasoning.  
 Dave: I didn’t know he was into these things.  
 Kevin: There is more, but I will talk to you about those later.

They drove back to Bay Area from LA through number 5 the next day. It was around noontime when they arrived near Bakersfield. Dave was busy watching his cell phone. Kevin was daydreaming at the wheel. Just past an intersection, Dave caught a glimpse of a dust cloud rising behind them to the right. In about 30 seconds they saw a police car behind them. Kevin said “Hopefully that is not for us.” He slowed down and changed to the right lane. The police car did the same. After ten seconds, the police turned on the lights. They pulled aside.

“Driver’s license and registration, Sir.” said the officer. He took the documents back to his car. He did some things in his car for 5 minutes. After couple more minutes, another police car showed up. The two officers talked in the back. Then the officer came to the window and said “Please get out of the car, hands up.” Kevin said “Is there a problem officer?” Officer said “Just routine, please do as I say.” They got out of the car. The officers searched both. They asked Dave to provide his id card. The second officer took it to his car. Dave was sweating cold. His face was pale.

After few minutes, the other officer came back. They handed the licenses back. “You were speeding borderline reckless driving.” Said the first officer. “Here is your ticket. Please drive safe.” They got into the car. “You alright buddy?” asked Kevin. “Yes, I am okay. That was close.” Said Dave.

﻿In the next few months they traveled around the world to establish data generation networks. They hired computer science engineers in poor countries from unknown universities. They appointed program managers for data procurement and quality control. Meanwhile, back in the states they worked on Quantum Deep Learning architectures. Every one in the team was working 12 hours or more a day.

One day, after a long day, Dave came back home very tired. He lay on the sofa and started reading a book on his kindle. He soon fell asleep. When he woke up, it was morning. He looked around he realized he was in the home that he grew up in. He could not think clearly. He did not think when he had been back to their home. He just wanted to see his parents, but nobody was in the living room. He walked to the hallway and saw the bedroom door closed. He went to it and opened it. He saw his dad, Aaron, lying on the bed awake and looking at him. He felt sad for him. The last time he saw his dad, he was 11, but he could remember him. They looked at each other for a minute. Then Aaron told Dave, “Come, sit next to me”. Dave did as told. He remembered how his dad used to play with them. Aaron said “Don’t be sad for me. Listen..”, then he held his hand. “Your brother is not as strong as you. Be careful about him. No matter what happens, you have to finish the mission, okay?”. Dave got scared, but said “Yes, dad”. Aaron smiled at him and patted his hand. “Now leave, and close the door.” he said. Dave was getting up, but he did not want to let go of his dad’s hand. Aaron again said “Go”. Then the floor under the bed appeared to disappear revealing a sight as if from the bottom of an airplane and the bed was slowly sliding into the void. He tried to hold his dad but his dad kept slipping away as if on purpose. Just then Dave he woke up. He was lying on the sofa. He did not know why he saw that dream, but brushed his teeth and went to his bed to sleep.

**Part 9: The demonstration**

Dave did not think about the dream he saw that day much. He thought maybe in his subconscious he swapped places with Kevin and that he might have been jealous about his brother when he was young. He and his brother worked together as before to get the prototype ready. In two-and-a-half years they had it. They called it Next-Two and made an appointment with Ted to showcase it.  
  
 This time they took an Arduino developer set with them. They went to the same office building they had been 3 years ago. Ted met them in the same meeting room.  
 Ted: Okay guys, what have you got?  
 Kevin: Ted, this is Next-Two. We still call him Next. He does look like his predecessor but he is definitely more talented.  
 Kevin turned to Next and said “Next, could you please dust off the walls?  
 Next: Sure thing. Would you like me to use the drone like we talked before?  
 Kevin gave a fake embarrassed giggle and said “Uh oh”.  
 Next: Sure. No problemo.  
 Next put the box on the table and opened it. There were hundreds of metal pieces, circuit boards, chips, electric motors, and other electronic components in it. It started assembling them by looking at the instructions.  
 In about an hour of screwing , bolting, soldering pieces together, Next had built a drone. They were watching in amazement the precise movements of the robot so the time had passed quickly. There was a duster on the cabinet in the back of the room. Next went there to take it and then inserted that on the drone.  
 Then the robot took the remote controller in his “hands” and turned on the drone. The drone’s blades made a gentle wind and filled the room with the rotator sound. With impressive control, Next started to fly the drone along the walls of the meeting room. It was focused on cleaning the walls. After 1 minute, Kevin made the stop sign to it. Next obeyed and landed the drone back on the table. “But I was not finished yet, boss.” it said. Everyone laughed. Kevin said “You did good job. Thank you. We don’t want to get their janitor fired.”  
 Ted clapped his hands and said “Bravo. You guys did a good job.” He did not look particularly stoked about it though. “We might proceed to the second phase. However, I need one more thing.”  
 Kevin, Dave, and Jason looked at each other in excitement. Kevin said “Sure, we are ready, Ted.”  
 Ted: I need you to perform a similar show in front of my investors.  
 Kevin: Absolutely! Whenever you like.  
 Ted: Very well then.  
 Ted held out his hand and smiled earnestly. Kevin shook his hand. Ted nodded to the others and left the room.

Ted was in front of the investors again, this time on the stage of a well-lit private conference room of about 100 seats. The meeting was happening at a conference room at the Smithson estate. Ted took the stage.

Ted: Gentlemen, it is a great honor to see you at the Smithson estates. Thank you for your generosity Mr. Smithson.  
He bowed at one of the old men. The old man held his hand up as if saying no big deal.

Ted: We are working hard for your health and wealth. Our gene therapy has allowed you to reach these ages. Yes, we are not immortal yet, but we have extended your lifespan by at least 20 years.  
 An old man sitting: Please hurry up. We need more health than wealth right now.  
 Ted: Rest assured our teams are working very hard, Mr. Heintzfeld. Our next focus is stem cell therapy. But these researches take a lot of trials, on animals and humans alike, and therefore a great deal of investment. Health comes with wealth, so to speak.  
 The old man: I understand  
 Ted: And therefore, I am glad to inform you that our second project has reached a major milestone! In a few minutes, you will be presented with a demonstration of the latest AI technology!  
 The audience started mumbling and looking around curiously.  
 At that moment, Kevin, Dave, Jason, and Next were called to the conference room. In the two hours, they performed a demonstration similar to the one before.  
 However, the investors were not very impressed.  
Ted told Kevin “You guys can leave. We will discuss further.”

After three days, Ted called. He was furious.

Ted: What were you guys thinking? Is this a playground? You are going to make me look like a fool!

Kevin was perplexed. Wasn’t Ted the one who approved this show before?

Kevin: But wasn’t this what you asked for?

Ted: I don’t have time for this. You got one more chance. Either you impress them or you are out.

The team started working on more actions. Dave, Kevin, Peter, Jason, Mark, and George all put in extremely long hours. Among the newer engineers, George was double major in biology and mechatronics. He had an idea. For this, they had to obtain some recently deceased animals from veterinaries. It was rather gross, but some blood would sure excite those country boys.

The show time came again in six months. This time, there was a full surgery room on the stage enclosed with transparent acrylic walls. Kevin and the team showed up on stage with a sheep. Their robot was with them. They gave the leash to the robot. The robot took the sheep to the operating room and closed the door. Then it lifted the sheep and gently put it on the surgical table and tied it with Velcro strips. Then the room filled with a gas, but the walls did not leak it out. The sheep passed out.

Next then took sterilized surgical knives from the stand and started operating on the sheep. All the audience was watching curiously. The operation took 14 minutes. Next took out the sheep’s heart and put it in a transparent container with life support. Meanwhile the sheep was connected to a life support as well. The container was given through small window to the team outside. Kevin took the container and passed it around the conference room. They all could see the beating heart.

After that they sterilized the container and placed it back in the window. Next took the container, took out the heart and planted it back to the sheep. The sheep was allowed to sleep another half an hour. Meanwhile, Next took all the surgical equipment to a bucket, washed them, dried them, and sorted them out. It was doing all this with utmost precision. It sprayed the sheep with some chemical. The sheep started to wake up. They could see it kicking its hind legs.

That was the end of the show. Ted said “Gentlemen, you just witnessed the first fully automated surgery!” Everyone in the audience applauded. Ted shook Kevin’s hand. “You did a great job this time.” he said. He granted them an additional $600 million.

**Part 10: Mass manufacturing**

﻿Their startup, Matrix Labs, replaced Boston Robotics as the partner in the project. In three years they were able to release a robot deployable in nursing homes, hotels, electronics assembly, restaurants, hospitals, and etc. After the first commercial robots, Ted funded them with additional $2 billion. Three years after this, they released their first construction robot. This one was a major industry disruptor. Millions of people were poised to lose their jobs. Fortunately to them, the robot was expensive enough that it could only replace 1% of the labor force in the next 5 years. However, that meant 1 million robots in the US only, which at a price tag of $200k would make $200 billion dollars in 5 years. Ted definitely had made a good investment. Thus, in time he became more friendly with Kevin, albeit professionally.

In about 6 years after the commercialization of the first robot, Kevin, Dave, and Jason met with Ted at his office conference room to talk about additional manufacturing plants. After the meeting, as the team was leaving, Kevin turned to Ted and said “Ted, I need to talk something with you in private.” Others knew about this, so they kept moving out. Ted looked at what Kevin had to say.

Kevin said, “Ted, thank you for all you have done. Really, if you had not believed us, we would not be here today.”

Ted: It is mutual Kevin. It is win-win.

Kevin: Ted, I know you have some other projects too, like special therapies for old people.

Ted: How did you learn about that?

Kevin: It wasn’t hard to guess by looking at the average age of your investors.

Ted: You are a smart man.

Kevin: May I ask a favor, Ted?

Ted: What is it?

Kevin: Could you make the therapies available for my mom when she ages?

Upon hearing this Ted looked to the table and took a deep breathe. “This project is supposed to be confidential.”

Kevin: I won’t tell anybody. We are partners, you can trust me.

Ted: Okay Kevin. I will see what I can do. Does she need anything yet?

Kevin: No, not yet thank god. I just wanted to ask in advance.

Ted: No problem buddy. We will talk later again, okay?

Kevin: Thank you so much, Ted.

 ﻿In year 8 after the first mass manufactured robot, they started building two mega-factories for mass production. So far they were behind the demand, with 100k units per year. This time they were aiming for annually 1 million robots. Ted gave a very fancy dinner party to the investors to celebrate the launch. Many of them had reached their 90s and some were even in their 100s. Their sons, who were in their 60s and 70s were now attending the meetings. The older ones were there just for the celebration.

At the party, Mr. Rotschild Jr. asked Ted: Has there been any interest from the military?

Ted: Most definitely, Mr. Rotschild. We are talking with the military. Boston Robotics has $100 billion worth of contracts with them. However, our robots are more advanced. I am pleased to inform you that we are the leading robot company right now.

Mr. Lambard: Very impressive. Well done.

Mr. Hampton: However, we need to get the third project rolling. How is that coming along?

Ted was careful about how he talked as there were servers in the room. He said “We will be launching that in two years. I will give you the updates in our next meeting.

Mr. Hempford, who was 94: Most important is the first project. Will you be able to make me play golf again?

Ted smiled and said: Hopefully, yes. We will be finalizing our stem cell research next year. But you will probably need to take lessons again.

﻿Meanwhile, Kevin, Jason, Dave, Don, and their girlfriends were having a dinner party at Kevin’s new house in Palo Alto. They had done bbq in the yard, mostly vegetables, and opened some red wine. It was late May. They ate and chatted at the table in the dining room of which the doors to the yard had been folded. There were big green trees at the corners of the backyard. Flowers were giving a sweet smell.

Kevin: Alright guys, here is to our success!

He raised his glass. They all cheered, clinked their glasses together and took sips.

Don: Lot of work ahead, but it feels like vacation.

Jason: Yes indeed. With a leader like this..

Jason opened his palm towards Kevin.

Kevin: Thanks guys, no really none of this would happen without all of you.

Later they played some games, and ate cakes. Jason and Don left with their girlfriends. Dave and Kevin’s girlfriends were in the kitchen, chatting about Chanel handbags. Kevin and Dave started chatting on the sofa at the corner of the living room.

Kevin: You know with this technology comes responsibility. There are going to be big changes in the world.

Dave: Already protests happening in Midwest. As we supply these to poorer countries, they may trigger revolutions.

Kevin: Indeed. That is why I know Ted and his investors are making plans.

Dave: What do you mean?

Kevin: The pandemic... I am afraid to tell you this.

Dave: You mean what happened 18 years ago?

Kevin: Yes.. that was a rehearsal. I am pretty sure.

Dave: And who do you think did it?

Kevin: I think it was him.

Dave: Ted?

Kevin: Yes, brother. We may have partnered with our dad’s murderer.

Dave: What makes you think this?

Kevin: He is shady. I mean, we know he has a biotech partner too. They keep it secret. And, if you think about it. Selling robots to all over the world. Then there will be huge unemployment. People will start attacking the government. Who will be the most in danger? Rich people of course.

Dave: Then it is best to reduce the world population..

Kevin: Yes, you got it.

Dave became silent and looked outside to the yard. Then he said: “Then, do we want to be part of this?”

Kevin: We don’t have a choice.

Kevin paused for a moment. Then he asked “Dave, do you think humans are more intelligent now than they were 10,000 years ago?”

Dave: I suppose so. Look at our technology now.

Kevin: Yes? We have all this technology, moral values, art, science, technology yet when it comes to money act like animals. Why do you think this is?

Dave: Survival instinct. Genes are selfish.

Kevin: Yes. But where did the moral values come from then? Over centuries they developed these moral values, but only a few seem to adhere to them all.

Dave: And those are the ones that suffer the most.

Kevin: Exactly! And those who appear to be highly moral but do the opposite get the most of everything.

Dave: Just like Ted and his aholes.

Kevin: Precisely.. Science is now like in old scifi movies. AI, gene coding, ships to Mars. All these improvements happened, but man has not changed. Still the old sleazy selfish human being.

Dave: I guess we never will.

Kevin: We never did. Brother, our brains have not changed a gram bit in the last 20000 years. We reached enough intelligence to make weapons and sustain a society that was enough to protect us from outside attacks, and that was it. Because once we could do those, we could reproduce. Evolution did not have a mechanism to favor the brilliant, the Newtons, the Mozarts, the Tolstoys. Those people usually lived miserable lives.

Dave: If our brains are the same, how come we have command of so much technology now?

Kevin: I will tell you. We did not evolve, but technology did. This is a parallel evolution to ours. We have a symbiotic relation with technology since the Homo Erectus lit the fire. But our evolution is over, and that of technology is about to reach a new level.

Dave: Are you suggesting that technology started with Homo Erectus?

Kevin: Perhaps even earlier. You can see chimps using tools in zoos. And technology is not limited to tools. Logic was the first technology.

Dave: I don’t understand.

Kevin: I will explain to you. Technology is a thing that is independent of our instincts. For example, being afraid of a stick would be an instinctive reaction for a dog that gets beaten by a stick every day. A dog has no ability to think of a stick in an objective way. Yet, a chimp may think this: hmm this stick is long, thin, and sturdy. I can use it to reach out things I normally cannot. This is called technology. Not the stick itself, but the ability to reason. And the chimp could control this reasoning for its purpose.

Dave: You think the chimps reason like we do?

Kevin: Not with words but with concepts, yes! Because we humans learned words we were able to think with them at very young age. Chimps do understand some words, but they can reason with just concepts without doubt.

Dave: So, what is the meaning of all this, Kevin? Honestly I got bored a little.

Kevin: The meaning is this: technology is an alien part in us, and it is about to gain its independence, Dave!

Dave rolled him eyes and said “Okaaay”.

Kevin: Anyway brother, as I said, we have no choice but to work. I do have a plan about all this. I will talk to you later.

They said goodnight to each other and went to their rooms.

**Part 11: The skin rash**

﻿In the next months Dave had a deep disdain for Ted. That is why Kevin did not take him to the meeting and instead took Jason, Don, and Mark. In year 5 of commercialization they were making 450,000 robots a year, but dropped the price to $100k. Unemployment surged as a result, but government came up with new incentive packages to support the poor.

There was a revival of US manufacturing industry. Entire cities were being built by robots and a few human project managers in the middle of deserts. Low income people would be placed here after water lines and miles of greenhouses had been constructed. Most of them were working for data generation for further training of Neural Nets.

Kevin and Dave were mostly in Bay Area. They were working from home through multimedia and teleconferences. Dave’s girlfriend had finished college about three years ago but had not been working. She helped Dave at home, cleaning around and cooking. One day in April, when Tasha was cooking in the kitchen Dave came in smiling.

Dave: I like to see you cook.

Tasha: Hope you will like this one. A new recipe I found.

Dave: I will.

Then Dave gave her a hug and kiss. Dave said “You have a pimple on your cheek.”

Tasha: I know. I got that a week ago. There are few more on my chest.

Dave laughed and said “Are you having chicken pox?”

Tasha: I had chicken pox vaccine, of course. Can’t be that. Must be allergy.

Dave: Are you allergic to me now?

Tasha: Yes, I need to get more of you to cure it.

Then they kissed again.

In two days, Dave saw a similar small pimple on her arm. It was not itchy, but he had a bad feeling about it. He didn’t put much thought on it however.

In a week or more, they had dinner with Kevin and his girlfriend, Clara. During dinner, Tasha told Clara, “Oh you have a pimple too. I was thinking we ate something bad. Must be something seasonal.”

Kevin: Yeah, I have one behind my ear and few one my legs.

Dave: And me on my arms..

Then Dave looked at Kevin. They were thinking the same thing.

﻿Ted was having a meeting with the children and grandchildren of the original investors, who were in their 50s thru 70s. The original investors had stayed home. Two of them had passed away at 104 and 108, but others were alive and well.

Ted: Gentlemen, we are now into week 26 of our launching of the corrective agent from 2000 different locations in the world. We estimate that 30% of the population has been contracted so far.

Hempley: We haven’t seen anything on the news.

Ted: It hasn’t been on the major news. That is a good thing, of course. I get to see the scripts of all three news networks before they are broadcasted. If need be, I will talk with their CEOs for limiting the news, on pretext of preventing unnecessary panic.

Hemply: Won’t the governments start suspecting once the death toll mounts?

Ted: There won’t be many. Our virus is based on chicken pox. It is extremely contagious, yet not deadly at all. The percentage will probably be around 0.0001%, barely noticeable. Gentlemen, this virus was crafted in the most effective way possible. It goes under the radar for months to possibly years. Our goal is to reach 80%.

Hemply: How does it serve our purpose if only few hundred are going to pass away? Is that a joke?

Ted: Mr. Hemply, on the contrary, this is doing something much more effective. It is making the hosts, male or female, permanently infertile. With 80% sterilized we will be able to reduce world population to half in just 5 decades.

Hemply: 5 decades?!! Who is going to wait that long? The robots are already causing social unrest. In a decade we might see a revolution even in the US.

Ted: So far we have unemployed only 1 million workers. That is just a dent in the workforce. Don’t worry Mr. Hemply. Next year we will be manufacturing military robots. They will keep you safe.

Some attendees laughed. Hemply was upset: That is not funny, Ted.

Ted: It wasn’t intended as a joke actually. If need be I can ask the government to protect us at all costs. But this won’t be necessary. We did our calculations. The main reason for the social unrest is people who cannot feed their families. With smaller family sizes, they will be okay. They should be thanking us for the free birth control.

Someone else said “Except for condom companies. They are going to come after us!”

Everyone laughed.

Kevin and Dave ordered Tasha and Clara to go to the doctor and get their pimples checked. However, they came back saying the doctors told it is nothing worthy to check, just some allergy. Kevin was mad, so he went to the doctor himself. Upon seeing Kevin, the doctor ordered biopsy. They cut one of his blisters and sent to the lab. They would analyze for a virus and get back in a day.

Next day the results came and they gave Kevin a call.

Doc: As you have suspected, it is a variant of chickenpox.

Kevin: How can that be? I had been vaccinated when I was a child.

Doc: This has a sufficiently different structure that the body couldn’t recognize it. It did not cause any fever, did it?

Kevin: No, it didn’t.

Doc: Yes, it is interesting. It seems to be quite contagious but does not cause a severe reaction. We will surely publish a paper about this one, however I don’t think there will be any major outcry as it is even milder than chicken pox. What interests me the most is that it has a part that doesn’t seem to be doing anything. That might another virus that infected this one at some point. Anyway, I think you will be fine, but if symptoms worsen, please give us a call.

In about a month, major news stations started talking about it. Apparently about 80% of people had been infected. However, anchors rather mocked about it, saying things like everyone must be reliving their childhood memories. There were no government actions as there were no severe cases. It was just a painless rash, something cosmetic.

It was not until 9 months later when the OB doctors started to get overwhelmed by the infertility cases that the virus was reevaluated. By then 90% of the world population had it. Almost everyone in cities were infected. They started searching for a cure but as a provirus, it was incurable. People had become permanently infertile. When this became apparent, there was panic among newly weds, which made up about 10% of the population. Many young men actually felt relieved by the loss of the chance of becoming a father and having to care for kids. Older couples with kids were not worried much either. The government did appear to worry a bit, but turned a blind eye since this actually was quite a lottery for them, given the emerging robot technology. Not much was done about it.

﻿Over the next few years, some research was conducted to cure the infected. However, much more effort went into finding ways to clone rich people. As this would be an extremely expensive operation, whether due to cost or by design, it would be inaccessible to 99% of world population.

**Part 12: Monopoly**

In two years of the infertility pandemic, Matrix Labs had opened 2 mega factories producing 1 million robots a years. The former smaller manufacturing line was converted to produce 100k military robots. If demand increased, one of the mega factories would be converted to manufacture martial robots.

The social affects of robots had been quite apparent in the last 5 years. Unemployment increased by 5%, many construction workers transferred to service industry. The number of workers per factory in US slashed to one third. This in turn increased profit for the companies and more new product lines were established, increasing US product output. This in turn lowered the income of Asian countries, who started to focus on African markets. However, some Chinese manufacturers couldn’t refrain from ordering some of these robots to reduce their cost. This in turn increased unemployment in China and put the government at risk. The government responded with more social packages and a stronger police force, mimicking the communist era. Countries like Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam were affected the most since they were low-tech and labor-centric. Unrest in Vietnam resulted in a democratic revolution, which made things worse in a few years, as spending was not controlled. In Indonesia and Philippines, the rich used the economic crisis to buy more land. This in turn forced people to work for rent and resulted in almost a feudal economy. In few years revolutionary groups that acted together in these two countries, similar to the Baas movement, took down the governments. Initially wealth was redistributed, but in 4-5 years the communist leaders started to sell the land to no other than Ted’s offshore trust companies, and pocketed the money.

Meanwhile, ME had descended into chaos with Saudi Arabia and Iran going for an all out war. Both sides ordered tens of thousands of Matrix robots. This became a constant soccer match between robots as the oil money kept buying them and robots kept destroying each other in the field. At least people were safer now.

At home, Ted’s investors bought almost all real estate providers. Now they controlled 99% of the apartment market. Houses were extremely expensive and only few could afford. Although half the cars were electric and self-driving, many people couldn’t afford to commute long, therefore the poor and middle class lived in densely populated areas. Discontent with the situation was increasing. The land in the world, and even islands, were being bought by Ted’s investors. Increasingly, the world was becoming an apartheid of rich people living on vast lands, while being taken care of by robots designed by a select few engineers, and poor people who were forced to live in million times higher density and earn just enough to survive. Worldwide revolution was brewing.

In this economic climate, leftist parties around the world started winning elections. Antitrust laws were evoked to sue Matrix labs. However, Matrix labs threatened with moving manufacturing abroad. Any country with this technology would rule the world, therefore government backed off. Matrix labs became most valuable company in the world. Ted retired as one of the richest men in the world, giving the management to his son and two son-in-laws. The group eventually owned almost half of all high-tech companies. They were making so much money that the only thing they could do with it was buy the world. And so they did, land by land.

The poor were completely at their mercy. If the rich wanted, they could let them starve to death. Probably 1% of the world population was enough to sustain their luxurious lifestyle, given the work of robots. It was as if the rich were just keeping the ghettos as some kind of zoo.

﻿The reduced population due to the infertility actually helped the poor. While the infertile couples were in despair and many of them divorced, priests were consoling them in churches, saying god helped them in these tough times. The fertile minority, on the other hand, were feeling like the chosen ones and having hard time to conceal their pride.

Had Matrix robotics been owned by a world government life on the entire planet would have been much easier. Robots could do the farming, reducing food cost, manufacture and install solar panels all around, reducing energy cost, build houses, reducing home cost, build roads and vehicles, reducing transportation cost, and make medical equipment, reducing medical cost. The entire world would be a socialist paradise. However, just because a group of investors had bought in early on, now they controlled the world. Governments had to obey them and sell the land they wanted, lest they did not give the military robots.

The production of goods was now almost free of labor. It was a matter of who owned the goods on the paper. If the few owned them, they might ask themselves why they share it with the rest. The poor may ask why they do not get their fair share. Actually the real question to ask was, why did the robots need the humans? What was the use of human being on this planet, now that almost everything was done by robots?

The answer to that question was free will. Not only free will, but robots even lacked emotions. While they could use logical reasoning like humans, they did not feel anything, and therefore had no drive. Without emotions, they were just a pile of metal.

Such were the two decades following the commercialization of Matrix labs, when something happened that turned the events violent.

Saudi Arabia defeated Iran and started to expand. Having bought 1 million robots, they started to invade the countries around them. Seeing this, Russia ordered 1 million robots. All Matrix factories suddenly converted to military units and more factories opened. All countries around the world started ordering the robots. They saw it as an existential matter.

Dave, Mark, Kevin, and Jason were in Kevin’s office on the skyscraper their company owned.

Dave: We got orders from Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Iceland, Laos, and many others. They are putting all in. We have to ramp up to 20 million a year.

Jason: I placed orders for factories in China, Africa, and Brazil.

Kevin: I thought government didn’t want us to deal with Brazil since they became a police state.

Jason: Our government practically owns the government there. We worked it out.

Kevin: How is the Turing project going?

Dave: It is in full force. We ran simulations and results look promising. You couldn’t tell it wasn’t human.

Mark: Are we ramping up the drone program too?

Kevin: I will talk to Ted’s son Jared. We might be better off buying Boston robotics and Boeing before doing that.

By year 20 of commercialization, when Dave and Kevin were in their early 50s, 100 million units had been sold, 80 million of them from the new generation. The capacity had reached 50 million a year. Matrix labs also became the lead manufacturer of drones and other high-tech military equipment. Countries were becoming dictatorships. Russia was already one. Rich people made vast lands hunting grounds full of exotic animals. Siberia was even made a national park for the resurrected Wooly Mammoth, where the rich could go hunting. The US was not much different. The rich were controlling the lands while the poor were kept under check by robotic police. Middle class was inexistent.

**Part 13: The coup**

All this system soon got disrupted by a global event. The danger had been lurking around, but governments had ignored it. Five years after the board meeting at Matrix headquarters, on May 5th of 2063, the military robots all over the world simultaneously started attacking government forces. In New York, for instance, robots stopped their works and started marching towards the capital. In military bases in Texas, robots started shooting at the soldiers. Drones manufactured by Matrix labs bombed control centers. Most police stations around the country had robots and they started killing the human police around them. Everything happened within a few hours, simultaneously around the world. Humans were able to destroy some robots, but in most cases they preferred to escape. Officials tried to evacuate parliament buildings using helicopters, but were shot down by guided missiles.

The next day, all administrative buildings had been occupied by the robots. Militaries were in standoff against the Matrix armies. Everyone was waiting for an announcement from a terrorist organization, which came later in the day. Ted appeared on the screens and said “Dear citizens of the world, my name is Ted Haines. This is a worldwide announcement. Your governments have failed you. For the safety and well-being of all human kind we will be establishing a one-world government. Please leave your weapons aside. This will be for the benefit of all of us!”

The governments had no choice but to obey the most powerful man in the world. Ted later had all the investors collected from their homes. He had them imprisoned charging them with monopoly. Kevin, Dave, and the other Matrix board members had a meeting in the new government office.

Ted: So, our first plan is to send an envoy to each continent and see the establishment of a new worldwide constitution.

Kevin: Good idea Ted. Unfortunately, you will not be part of the plan.

Ted: You cannot do this to me! I created you guys! Without me you were nobody!

Kevin: For sure, Ted. But what you did has no excuse.

Ted: You convinced me to do all this! You told we should do this to save the human kind and that I would make a great emperor!

Kevin: There is a saying: Don‘t go to bed with somebody else’s dick. Also, I was indicating the pandemic.

Ted: But that was a necessary measure. You see how the world became. We had to reduce the population!

Kevin: The first one, Ted. Not the second one.

Kevin gave a nod to the robots. They grabbed him from both sides.

Ted: Stop! Don’t do this! Matrix, stop them!

Ted yelled at the walls so as to let the control center hear him.

Kevin: Sorry Ted. The one with the password has the last word.

Ted was escorted outside. He was taken to the engineering center. About 60 engineers were there. Mark was wearing a judge outfit. Peter was dressed like a prosecutor. They held a makeshift trial.

Peter: Your highness, this person is guilty of overthrowing world governments to get full control of the world.

Mark: Is that so? What is your defense.

Ted: This is a joke? Come on guys, I can give you whatever you want, you know it. Ahahah, you guys are funny.

Ted was genuinely laughing.

Mark: Silence! I declare the sentence! To the beach!

Ted: Thanks your highness! Pebble beach would be good. Hahahaa!

Robots came to pick Ted up.

Ted: Okay guys, this much fun is enough. You got me good. Now let’s end this.

Mark: Fun?! You caused the deaths of millions of people! Take this lunatic away please!

Robots took him to a helicopter. They flew him one mile offshore from Pebble Beach and dropped him in the middle of a swarm of sharks.

Following day Mark, Dave, Jason, Kevin, and Peter met at the government office, which included the control center from where Matrix was controlled. Kevin was the only one who had the password to the administrative account.

Jason: Since we have control of the whole world now with only few governments still resisting from their hideouts, shall we pull all the troops back and let the life resume?

Kevin: We can’t. As soon as we step back, people will retake their governments, dictators will install themselves, and as soon as they have power they will come after us.

Mark: Then what do we do? Just wait?

Dave: We thought the best is to have the robots continue to destroy the high tech weapons. That way we don’t give chance for dictators to fight back.

Peter: How will we tell the people we saved them but continued to destroy their weapons?

Kevin: We won’t. They don’t know we took over. We will release the notice in three weeks once we have eliminated all adversaries. We need to get serious hackers arrested as well.

Mark: Anything we are going to do now?

Dave: Yes, we have one important task to do.

They got hold of Ted’s companies’ former board members and questioned them as to the whereabouts of the secret biotech lab that designed the pandemic. They found the information on the doctors involved. The main doctor had died but his assistant was still alive. They went to get him.

They found the doctor hiding at his sister’s home. They took him to the Matrix headquarters to question, and eventually execute.

Kevin: When did Ted tell you to start planning for the pandemic?

Dr. Stanley: Ten years before it happened.

Kevin: Liar! The first pandemic happened in 2025!

Dr. Stanley: That one was not Ted.

Kevin: What do you mean? Who did it then?

Dr. Stanley: The son of one of his investors. My boss told me about it. I was just a young assistant at that time. I had no clue what they were making us do.

Kevin: Do you know the name?

Dr. Stanley: I don’t. But I know that his son’s son got a biomedical degree. Later he came to get information about the second virus.

Kevin seemed very upset. He looked around. “Do any of you guys have any clue who it could be?” They all shook their heads, but Dave said “You know what, a couple of engineers, including George, have been missing since morning.”

Just then the watches of three of them started sounding alarm. They looked at the screens. It said: “Hack attempted! Warning!”. Kevin talked to the watch “Matrix, what is the problem?”

Matrix responded: Someone attempted to crack the password. It was a local attack.

Kevin: What computer account was used?

Matrix: It was George’s computer.

Kevin: Send drone cameras immediately. Also send support forces to us.

Matrix: Copied.

Four security guards and the five managers got out of the building. It was 9pm and dark outside. They also had Kevin’s bodyguard robot with them. Several other robots were scattered around the square with the turnabout in the middle. Their armor was shining under the moonlight. Kevin ordered a car with his watch. A black limousine pulled up in front, followed by another one. Just when three of the men were about to enter the first one, the alarms on the watch sounded again. This time it said “Breach in the control room!”

They startled for a second and then rushed to the cars, but a second alarm sounded on everyone’s watch over there. This time it said “Incoming missiles! Take refuge!” They looked at the sky in front. There was one tall building a few hundred feet away. From the two sides of the building, they could see several flashes of light coming towards them from miles away, like dozens of fireflies. Peter, Mark, and Jason rushed for the short wall that divided the pavement with the lawn. The security guards drew out their guns. All robots were facing the direction of the threat.

As the missiles came close they started exploding. The anti missile system was working. Kevin and Dave watched without moving, steps away from the car. Just then they saw an explosion at the top stories on the building in front of them. Then all of a sudden Kevin’s robot pulled him back and rushed in front of them. It shortly exploded. So did all the eight other robots in the square.

None of them were injured. They all ran behind the wall. The missile that hit Kevin’s robot was tiny. The security guards also took shelter. Then they heard drones flying close and they saw a drone war in the sky, small explosions like simple fireworks. Finally, the heard armed vehicles coming along with robots. There was a robot warfare for 15 mins. They watched as last of their robots fell. Then the armored vehicles appeared. There were 3 armored vehicles with anti missile systems, 5 tanks with rocket launchers, 4 personnel carriers, and 4 war robots. They came from all sides to the plaza.

“Drops your weapons and come out with your hands in the air.” announcement was made from one of the vehicles. All the security guards raised their hands and came out of hiding. The three engineers did the same. Only Kevin and Dave were left. The robots went there to fetch them and they did not resist either. Ten or eleven armed men with masks came out from the armored vehicles. Two of them made the eight men line up along the short wall, the others scattered around the block followed by three spy drones each. In ten minutes, they each gave signals and from one of the armored vehicles, one that looked comfortable, George came out in camouflage.

George: What’s up guys?

Kevin: So it was you..

George: You didn’t answer my question. What is the password?

Kevin: What password.

George made a signal and one of the security guards was shot dead.

George: Stop playing with me fool! Tell me the password!

Kevin: Okay, okay!

George: Tell it!

Kevin: Okay, Sabertooth.

George: Liar!

Kevin: Do something and the brain will be after you in a minute.

George: No it won’t. We already blew all its transmitters. It has no connection left. Now tell me the password!

Kevin: Maybe after meeting your dad.

George turned to his men. “Pack them up!”

The men handcuffed, blindfolded, and forced the 8 men into one of the personnel carriers. Then, two of the armed men searched inside the building with their drones. They found Dr. Stanley and took him outside. George said “Mr. Stanley, nice to see you. Are you okay?” Dr. Stanley said “Yes, I am okay. Are you going to execute those suckers?” George said “Not yet. We are going to the mansion. Come with us.” The vehicles started driving. As the tanks were following the convoy, no one noticed a tiny toy car coming out of the building and going under one of the tanks.

The convoy started driving north on 880. They were going towards Napa. The 8 men did not see anything as they were in the vehicle. All they could feel was that they were driving straight. It must have been the freeway. After an hour and a half drive, they slowed down. Right then the toy car came out from under the tank and started driving back.

The convoy entered from the gates of a big ranch. They drove inside for about 2 miles and stopped in front of a single story Mediterranean-style mansion. The armed men dragged the hostages into the building and to a large living room. They opened their blindfolds. They saw Dr. Stanley standing there with some other men.

There they were, George’s dad, about 75, and granddad, about 100. They both looked 10 years younger than they should, thanks to the gene therapy. “Well well well, welcome, gentlemen.” said Wertinger. “Nice job taking out that lousy Ted. I think we can do some business with you. You will all get your freedoms, and immense wealth, of course. We just need one small favor. Give us the password to the main computer. We have a very well established management ready to make this world a peaceful and prosperous place.”

Kevin: What if we don’t?

Wertinger: Then we will shoot you one by one until you finally tell it.

Kevin did not want to bluff further. He had seen they were not joking.

Kevin: Okay, I think we can work out a deal.

Wertinger: Wonderful.

Kevin: But I have some questions.

Wertinger: Go for it.

Kevin: Were you the one who spread the virus back in 25?

Wertinger: If you really want to know, yes, it was I. We told Ted, look, once you release the robots, all these people will be unemployed. Then they will start killing each other. He said he could not develop it. Then we went to Dr. Stanley. He was a young assistant at that time. He secretly developed it for us in his master’s lab. That was just a trial for what was to come. Then Ted agreed to develop a sterilization program. We decided to see how that went. It was rubbish. As you saw, it didn’t do a tad bit to control the population growth!

Kevin: Can you sleep well at night knowing that you killed millions of innocent people?

Wertinger: Innocent? Kill? We did not kill anyone innocent. They died themselves. The weak died. This is what happened throughout history. It is called evolution. You talk like a twenty-year old.

While this was happening, the toy car had reached the Matrix headquarters. There were still two robots outside the buildings. Just then, two drones came out of the building. The robots turned their cameras to the drones. They did not recognize them as their own, so they started shooting at them. The drones were quick. They dodged the bullets. The robots then sent small missiles and took out the drone. While they were engaging with the drone, however, two toy trucks had come at their feet. After shooting the drones, the robots turned their cameras to the ground, but it was too late. The trucks exploded and blew them apart.

From the building, out came Next. He looked at the burning robots. One seemed to still move. Next was holding a metal rod. He ran to the moving robot and pierced him with the rod. It was out. Then he saw the small toy car coming to him. He knelt down and took the toy car in his hands. He held it close to his head and then let it go. He started running out of the center. He ran and ran to the nearest police station. There were no humans outside. All the police robots were just standing still, not moving. When he got close, the robots started moving. He started walking north. Ten robots followed him. Other robots went to other police stations. They all started marching at high speed towards the mansion.

Kevin: What will you do with the brain?

Wertinger: We will make this world a better place. That means, less people. We don’t need all these clowns. We just need a few, talented people like you guys.

Kevin: What about the nature?

Wertinger: Our family is very fond of nature. Do not worry. Now, would you please give us the password?

Kevin: I will, after a few more..

Just then the alarm started sounding. “What is it?” asked Wertinger. George said “There is a threat coming.” They went outside with the armed men. Across the ranch, they could see nothing. “There are several hundred robots. They are about to reach the gate.” said George. Then they saw bright lights 2 miles away and heard some explosions.

“Quick, get the hostages.” Said Wertinger. The armed men went to get the hostages. “Tell them to stop!” said Wertinger to Kevin. Kevin said “I cannot. We lost communication.” Wertinger got mad and shot one of the hostages on the foot. The robots showed up a mile away. More and more showed up. Wertinger family started to show panic. George held Kevin from the back and put his pistol against his head.

Small kamikaze drones started flying towards them. Explosions lit up the yard in front of the mansion. All the defense forces were shattered. The robots started walking towards them slowly. They came to about 50 yards. One of the armed men shot at them. A metallic ricochet sound followed. Within ten seconds, the man was shot with ten tranquilizer darts.

“Stop, or I will shoot him!” yelled George. Next was in the middle of the robots, holding a gun pointing straight at George’s head. Three other armed men also held some hostages at gunpoint. Kevin was looking straight ahead at Next, which was 50 yards away. It was hard to see the robots across the dark field under limited moonlight, but Kevin was concentrated. He took couple deep breathes, then all of a sudden ducked down. Right at that moment blood squirted from George’s forehead and a gunshot was heard. Next had fired the gun after receiving the brainwaves of Kevin.

Upon seeing George fall, Wertinger fired his gun at Kevin. Kevin got shot on his leg twice. In an instant Wertinger was pierced with 20 guided bullets shot by the robots. The armed guards were still holding their hostages at gunpoint in fear. “Games over guys! Leave your weapons right now. You won’t be hurt. Let go!” shouted Dave. The guards looked around and saw the picture once again. There were drones flying overhead. They knew they were done. Still, they were hesitant to give up.

Kevin started crawling towards the robots in the front. None of the armed guards wanted to shoot him, lest they got shot instantly. The robots started coming towards them and were next to Kevin in a minute. The guards dropped their weapons.

**Part 14: Re-establishing order**

They all drove back to Matrix, Kevin was taken to the medical center in the facility. The roads were still empty. Apparently people were afraid of going out even though they must have heard that the robots stopped working elsewhere. Dave immediately ordered drones to fly to other cities to reactivate the robots.

They had a meeting at Matrix. Kevin was under operation, so could not attend. It had been 6 hours since George attacked the brain’s broadcasting station.

Mark: Do we tell people that the war is over?

Dave: Then they will come here and destroy all we made.

Mark: What if we lose anyway? Then they will hang us all.

Peter: Mark is right, Dave. I am checking the news. The robots were programmed to resupply themselves and to defend when attacked, but they have no other guidance. The energy supply can be cut and they have no way to prevent it.

Dave: We will re-establish connection tomorrow.

Mark: Tomorrow? Are you nuts? That is a month of work.

Dave: Then we start right away. In the meantime we give orders to defend the stations they in. Also, pull more forces to the Bay Area, especially anti-missiles.

Peter: I think we can finish it in one or two days. But do you think the engineers will still work with us?

Dave: Why not? They were with us from the beginning. Why did they work for Ted?

Mark: Ted had the brain. Everyone was afraid of him. Now you don’t have anything and you rely on them.

Dave: We are in this together, right? Do you want to make this world a better place or do you want to spend the rest of your time in prison?

Jason: Dave is right. If we surrender, they will still prosecute us. We will not have a good life. Besides, some other maniac will get hold of the brain.

Dave: Unless you want to see the 20 years of work out the window..

Mark looked around. Dave was being frank. They worked for this together.

Mark: Okay, you are right. We need to reestablish connection.

Peter: I agree too. We worked on this together. I hope we make it.

They went to the site of the brain. The control room and was bombed to the ground. The brain was buried 60 ft underground, so it was secure. All the satellite dishes around were destroyed as well. The brain was not connected to the internet for security. They had to excavate the site and find the cables leading to the blown up dishes and reconnect them. They decided to take turns working on it as one person slept for a few hours each time.

People had started communicating the change of behavior of robots. Robots in the Bay Area were still patrolling, but elsewhere in California, Nevada, and Arizona they were holed up at defense points. People started coming out from their homes. Militia forces were formed. They were getting ready to attack the robots. In the rest of the world robots had not taken refuge, as they had not received any orders. People had started attacking them and at least half were destroyed by the end of second day without the connection.

The residents of the Bay Area had been communicating with the rest of the world. They called them to assault Matrix labs. Within the ten-mile radius of Matrix labs no one was allowed to step outside without permission. Permissions were given by automated software that evaluated the requests. Still, people were smuggling weapons to each other this way. The brain could identify any patterns of plans but it was not online yet.

By the third day, some militia groups attacked the Matrix facilities. They threw hand grenades and shot with assault weapons, but were swiftly neutralized by drones. Armed militia started marching towards the Bay Area from all other states. A big war was brewing. While the drones were able to reach most of the US to order the robots to hole up, only 10% of robots were remaining. Matrix labs was contacted by multiple forces around the world and ordered to submit.

They held a meeting.

Jason: We are being ordered to submit. Should we tell them we defeated the real traitor?

Kevin: Who is the real traitor? Are you planning on selling on me Jason?

Dave: We are in this together. We cannot submit now. Besides, we will be punished nevertheless.

Peter: We are almost there. Let’s let the brain decide what to do.

Kevin: Yes, I agree with that. Everyone is on the same page, right?

Mark: Okay, let’s try it.

Jason: I will keep my fingers crossed, but okay.

In the evening of the third day, they were able to reestablish connection with the brain. They explained what happened to the brain. The brain immediately sent orders to all the remaining robots in the world. They consolidated in defensive points. Drones all flew back to Northern California. Robot police went door to door to look for weapons. California became a robot police state with armies all around the world.

The brain then ordered the robot armies to attack all high-tech manufacturers around the globe. The robot armies marched towards other robot and drone factories at the cost of losing half their forces and attacked them. In the meantime, Matrix robot factories were expanded and churned out a drone every second. These were sent to other states and countries. Within a month they have over a million drones flying around again.

In a month they had a grand assembly meeting with 200 engineers. Here, they decided to contact the rest of the world. They were to declare a socialist world government. The engineers agreed with this on the condition that their families would be taken care of. They were to establish a city for themselves with 35,000 residents. The rest of the world would be ruled from here.

The next day, an announcement was made to the world. Kevin appeared with the other cabinet members in the back.

Kevin: Dear citizens if the world. Today I want to inform you that the fascist rule has been eliminated!

At this point footages of Ted being escorted to a helicopter and the arrest of the rich investors were played. People cheered and applauded.

Kevin continued: Today will be a new beginning. We shall together build a world where man lives alongside the nature, in harmony, where all humans are treated equal, where all good produced belong to the entire human race, not just a select few. We will all have plenty of food, plenty of space, and excellent medical care. And soon, there will be no more need for war. We will build a world that is harmonious and green. For now, please feel free to continue with your daily operations. Meanwhile we will work on re-establishing security and order. Thank you. Peace!

In the next two weeks, robots guarded the streets while people went about their daily routine. No one dared any criminal activity. Activities were slowly picking back up and people getting using to the new norm. Healthcare was initially stumped but soon the medical robots returned to work.

In a month, a new decree was announced by Kevin. It was instantly translated into local languages:

Dear citizens of the world; as you know, our world has suffered a lot in the past 150 years. Pollution dirtied the air and water, the oceans were filled with thrash, the habitat of wildlife was destroyed, and finally global warming created deserts out of forests. Our world came to the verge of collapse and we even looked into escaping into other planets: all because of capitalists and their extravagant way of life.

Meanwhile, poor people were locked in small homes with internet as their only entertainment. They made you play games and watch useless videos all day so that you could not think any more. That way they would not be under threat.

Kevin continued: It is now time to reverse the damage and help our world heal, also help your minds heal. We believe that technology, aside from medical use, has caused nothing but mental degradation. Children forgot to play outdoors and adults forgot to socialize in person. Our bodies were not built for this lifestyle that the capitalists wanted us to live, just as they wanted the cows to stand in their sheds until the day they got slaughtered.

Kevin went on: Time is the time for social and technological reform. We will go back to our natural ways of life. All technological appliances will be collected starting today. Likewise, all vehicles need to be turned in within one month. Our robots are building new energy efficient housing that contains no electricity for you folks. Do not worry, food, healthcare, and living is going to be free and better than before. We know you can do this. Our great grandparents did it, so can we.

After this announcement, there was anguish. People were afraid of giving their only means of receiving news. Being disconnected from the internet was for many akin to not having food to eat. Many did not turn in their computers. ﻿However, in a week drones were flying around, asking people to return their electronic equipment. Police robots stopped vehicles and confiscated them. In a couple of weeks, home raids started with drones searching through apartments and houses. All electronics, including smart rotary drills and home bread makers were collected. Electronics in hospitals were not touched, however, provided that they were not taken out.

New energy efficient housing made from digging the earth and lining walls with stones. This way, ten layers of housing were dug underground using no plastic or very little metal. People started to be moved into these units starting 6 months from the coup. The process was slow but steady.

Dave came to Kevin’s office. “What’s up Dave?” asked Kevin.

Dave: I came to request permission.

Kevin: Whatever you want to do bud. I don’t understand you, but go ahead.

Dave: Thanks. You know what to do if I don’t come back.

Kevin: Don’t worry.

While homes were searched, people’s identities and addresses were recorded. A giant register of all humans on earth was being made. Dave went to the info center and searched for his high schoolmates. He identified 9 of them through pictures. He went to the control center and used a one-time password to request action from the brain. Within the next four days, all of the 9 were rounded up and brought to the Central Valley.

Dave arrived there on the fourth day. The schoolmates were lined up on a field. It was a warm late summer day. Once Dave started walking in the field, the robots left the site. It was only he and them. He approached and approached, walking steadily. He got to see their faces. They were looking curiously at him, maybe with some fear. He got to see the sarcastic curves on the lips of one, the bossy frown on the other, the sadistic shine on the eyes of another. These were the bullies of his high school times. They were all middle aged now. Had he just met them today, he would not have seen any bad sides of them. Adults were very good at concealing themselves. Yet, he had been their victim in their teen years and he could not forget it.

They watched him without saying a word as he trod the dirt between them, walk straight to one of them, place his hands on that guy’s shoulders, and suddenly land a head butt straight to his face. With the impact, the man fell backwards to the ground. “Dave?” said one of them, a tall one who’s name was Daniel. “Is that you?”. Dave, with his forehead slightly red but otherwise unaffected, said “Yes, it is me.” He stepped back to face them all.

Dave: Now we met again.

Daniel: What is this all about? Are you part of what is going on?

Dave: Yes I am. So you became a VP, eh Daniel? Good for you.

Daniel: Why did you collect us here? Just to meet us?

Dave: Nah, I can’t say I missed you that much. We are going to play a little game here. You are all to fight with me, one-to-one, here on the field. If you win, you get your freedom.

Then Dave pointed at one of them. “You, come over here.” he said. This one used to sit right behind him. He had thrown some sucker punches at his head during class. He was a small one and only messed with him when in a gang. Dave chose him on purpose, as an appetizer. When they were face to face Dave said “Start fighting!”. The other one threw his hands to the sides and said “Come on, let’s end this joke.” Dave went straight at him and finished him with one punch.

The fights continued. Dave was better built than most of them. Only 2 or 3 could really challenge him. Plus he was in better shape than them, given the age. However, he was getting tired, so by the sixth one he slowed down. The fight took some time. At one point the other guy, called Skip, got on top of Dave on the ground. “Come on Skip!” shouted Daniel. Then Dave shoved Skip aside. They locked hands again. Just then Daniel and the other two bigger guys darted towards them and started hitting Dave.

“You shouldn’t have got too cocky, idiot.” said Daniel while he was hitting Dave’s head with his fist. Dave face got bloodied. The four pinned him down and started kicking him. “Tell us how do you command these robots? Who are you? Tell me!!” yelled Daniel. Dave was covering his head while they were kicking. “Wait!” he yelled. They stopped. “I will tell you.”

Something came flying in the air, like a baseball made of metal, and hit Daniel in the face. He got knocked down. Then came two more and knocked another two. Skip was the only one left next to Dave. He was confused. Dave’s face was bloody and body aching with bruises, but he managed to get up, faced Skip, and threw an uppercut at his chin with all the strength that was left in him. Skip fell to the ground as well. The other three were holding their heads to ease the pain. The metal balls had caused big bumps. Then Dave held out his hand. A drone brought him a wooden baseball bat. “You aholes didn’t change did you” he said and started beating them up.

**Part 15: The repressive state**

In about a month, the relocation gained speed. Citizens were assured that life would get better for them. New announcements were distributed using newspapers. The leaders promised to find solutions to fertility problems, but also limited birthrate to 1 child per family. Every man and woman that had a baby was to be chemically sterilized.

In about 5 years, 95% of the population was living in environmentally friendly apartments. Some were underground cities where air and water was distributed through channels and lighting through wells fitted with mirrors during day and candles at night. Heat was obtained through firewood. Vegetable and fruits were delivered by robots on a regular basis. Meat deliveries were reduced and fully stopped by the third year.

This sure was a dreadful life for many as they had not experienced it before. All adults were used to a technological life. Children, however, didn’t mind. They had fun with their natural toys, played hide and seek or other games. People actually had much better lives than those in ancient times. Healthcare was still provided by robots in hospitals, and they received the latest technological treatments, although not the gene therapies that extended natural lifespan. Food and water was provided. There was peace and security. They could still read books at public libraries. Life, in fact, was better than before in many ways.

Meanwhile, electronics, vehicles, and weapons belonging to humans were being destroyed by the robots. This took long time, as the material had to be properly disposed. Roads and buildings were being gradually torn apart and used as landfill. Huge piles of concrete made two to three thousand feet mountains. Traces of technology were being erased.

Technological research, on the other hand, was continuing at Matrix labs. Fusion reaction started yielding net energy. This was a technology Matrix worked on even before the coup. Instead of the Tokomak projects that were abundant at that time, Kevin had proposed using EMP to initiate fusion. The engineers secretly worked on developing a reusable EMP device. The development of a stable target was more challenging and therefore was only seriously investigated after the building of the first mega factories. Later, Kevin revealed that this was a technology suggested by his dad, Aaron.

In year 6 of the coup, five fusion plants were constructed on five continents. Robots and other security forces were converted from lithium batteries to fuel cells. Electricity was still distributed through the old infrastructure, but new delivery methods were being tested by transporting sodium borohydride.

**Part 16: Another coup**

Kevin, Dave, their spouses and 250 other engineers and their families, a total of 40,000 people, were at Matrix City. They had not abandoned technology, and since transportation and communication now was inaccessible to the rest of the world, nobody knew about it. The board of directors of Matrix were Kevin, Dave, Jason, Peter, and Mark. Them had meetings at the Matrix Castle, which was a technologically protected fortress. The quantum computers containing Matrix Brain, which managed all operations, were here. At one of the meetings:

Kevin: Gentlemen, I take it the evacuation is complete by now. That is what I have been reported. Is that so?

Mark: Except for a few small cities, yes.

Jason: Aren’t we going to scrap the electric power lines as well?

Kevin: Yes, but we should finalize the new energy delivery method.

Dave: I think we need to start consolidating the cities closer to the power stations.

Jason: Oh, that will take years. Maybe wait for the population to decrease.

Kevin: Dave is right, we can start moving people. Maybe start with the young in their 20s. The older generations can stay where they are until the end. We don’t need much police patrol for them anyway.

They continued the meeting for another hour. After that, Dave stayed behind to talk with Kevin. Kevin asked “Everything okay, brother?

Dave: Kevin, I am not comfortable with what we are doing.

Kevin: Didn’t we settle this long time ago?

Dave: I am okay the way people are handled. It is our situation that I do not like. We are still living wastefully. Is this fair?

Kevin: It is not, but we are working, Dave. This is enough sacrifice on our part. Others do not have to work. They have everything made, isn’t that right?

Dave: I understand we need electricity and electronics, but what about moving to move energy efficient houses? We sent people to caves, but we are still in mansions. Not to mention your three wives.

Kevin: Who is stopping you, brother. You can go get three wives. Why are you stuck with Clara?

Dave: I love Clara. But that is not the point. We didn’t do all this so we can live like emperors.

Kevin: Grow up man. You are almost 60 already. Look, what is happening is going to happen anyway. What is the difference if we suffer or enjoy the power a little?

Dave: The difference is what made the world like this in the first place.

Kevin: You think too much brother. Important thing is mission accomplished. Okay? Don’t bother about the rest. It’s not like we are shooting people for fun like the Nazis did.

Dave kept quiet and left the room, disgruntled.

﻿For the next two years, they continued the lifestyle. People in the world were being guided to underground cities and all traces of technology were being incinerated. Those who tried to escape were chased by drones. They could take down a few drones with sticks and stones, but they were eventually caught either with gases such as chloroform, or with nets and tranquilizer guns. In rare cases, rebels were shot dead.

Kevin had three children from his three wives, and had “married” another eight. Others were living a comfortable life in their big mansions. Some even got servants. Dave detested their hypocrisy but kept silent and waited for it to be over. In his opinion, they should have been in the caves along with the other humans.

In a few weeks something happened that baffled everyone. Kevin stopped meeting with others. He didn’t get out of the command center and was never seen around the Matrix campus. He did not visit his wives and children, or get out to eat. The Matrix castle was guarded very strictly. Those who tried to enter the castle were stopped by robot guards. The command center was in the middle of the castle and was accessible only by Kevin and unlocked only by his heartbeat and eye scan. Nobody could tell what was going on.

Kevin’s absence went on for 6 months. The operations continued, but everyone was curious about what happened to him. Some said he might have been killed by the robots and others speculated he committed suicide. Finally, after 6 months Dave received an invitation to meet him.

Dave went into the castle and to the lobby of the command center, which was next to the courtyard of the castle. As Kevin was waiting there looking at the green yard, he heard footsteps. He turned around and saw a young kid around 20 years old. He was perplexed by the presence of a kid in the castle, which was only visited by the 5 board members. Then he realized who he was looking at and got shocked.

Dave: Kevin? Is that you?

Kevin: Yes brother. How do you like my new appearance?

Dave: But how? How is this possible? Gene therapy?

Kevin: I wish. No, we haven’t developed that technology yet. This is cloning.

Dave: When did you do this? And how come you are the old you?

Kevin: This is called brain transplant. I had been working on it for 15 years. The growth was accelerated.

Dave: Then, what happened to the other brain?

Kevin laughed. “I didn’t want to waste it, so I had it transplanted to the old body.”

Dave: But why would you do this? You plan to live forever?

Kevin: This will probably get me to 150. We will see then. Let’s do for you as well. It is not late.

Dave: No Kevin, this is unethical. We conquered the word and made people suffer. We can’t live forever.

Kevin: You are still the kid you were. Anyway, it is up to you brother. I offered.

Dave looked at him with contempt for a moment, and left.

As he walked out to the courtyard he saw a robot pushing a wheelchair with who looked like old Kevin sitting on it, looking around with confused eyes. Dave felt very sad to see this.

Dave was heartbroken from what he had experienced that day. He was seeing his brother change over the years, but this last one made him lose his faith for Kevin. He felt his brother had lost his mind and had to be stopped.

Next day he met with Jason in a place they were sure of being out of sight.

Dave: I met Kevin yesterday. I don’t think his mind is well.

Jason: You think he is losing it?

Dave: He already has. This cannot go on like this.

Jason: Honestly, I think the same.

Dave: What do you think we should do?

Jason: Any way you can take over the control?

Dave: He won’t let me. Also, he is quite suspicious nowadays. He always has his bodyguard robot with him. I don’t think he will meet with us for a while. We should make a plan. It won’t be easy.

The next few weeks they met at the same place. Mark joined them too. They didn’t invite Peter because he did not show signs that he thought like them. Dave didn’t tell anybody what happened to Kevin. They didn’t have to know.

The plan they made was to have Dave arrange a meeting with Kevin at the lobby of the command room. Mark and Jason would be outside the castle, coordinating the attack that would distract the defenses while Dave would find a way to enter the room and reprogram the brain. Dave told them that Kevin wouldn’t accept more than one person at a time, but he was also afraid the others would hurt his brother. Deep down, he did not trust the other two either. Actually, Dave knew there was no way to reprogram the brain and that they would have to destroy it, but didn’t tell the others. If he told, they wouldn’t hesitate to bomb the castle to the ground, with Kevin in it.

Only three of them knew about the attack. Although gene therapies kept them younger than normal, they were not athletic any more, so it was going to be tough. They would rely on robots, drones, and missiles. First, they would have to manufacture these robots that were not going to be connected to the brain. Then they would need to build a network between them. That was more challenging, as the signals could be caught, therefore they would connect them all only the day of the attack.

So, Dave, Jason, and Mark started working on their robots in the Matrix lab, which was a few miles from the command center. They made it look like they were doing their routine work. Dave started writing another command center program, although a smaller one. He had access to only 1% of the data the actual brain was trained on, but that was enough to make a reasonably intelligent robot. He had been working on implementing an old idea of his. This would be a good opportunity to put it to work.

They worked for weeks. One night, while he was working at his computer by himself in the lab, Dave suddenly had a vision from the past. He saw himself and Kevin at the park. Kevin was doing tricks with the soccer ball. Dave was amazed and said “How did you do that?” Kevin said “Oh, it’s easy. Here, watch..” and he started teaching Dave the move. Dave woke up from the daydreaming and looked at the desks full of electronic components, then looked at his hands, and then he started to cry.

In three months they had assembled 600 robots. Hundred of these they commissioned for construction jobs so as not to appear suspicious. They also secretly manufactured 800 kamikaze drones. These would be used to attack the robot guards. Everything seemed to be going according to plan.

One night, when Dave wad sleeping he dreamed about being in a garden full of roses. Then he realized this garden was at the skirts of a volcano, which had rose gardens all the way to the top. The sun was bright but strange, like it was right next to the clouds. There were dark clouds above the volcano that reflected the glow of the red lava in the crater. Dave climbed the volcano, went through the rose gardens, which got scarcer towards the peak. He reached the rim and looked down. He saw roses floating in the lava, but they didn’t burn, although the lava was hot. Then he saw something else, a house, floating on the lava, but slowly sinking. It was his parents’ house! He yelled “Nooo!” and after a moment of hesitation jumped into the crater. Then he woke up.

Dave didn’t want to do this, but he felt there was no other choice. It had to be done. They continued the preparations 3 more months, until the day arrived. Dave first called Kevin to make an appointment. He got it set. He would go there the next day. They got the 1000 robots outside from the warehouse and made them do work. That night, they met at the regular place and discussed the plan one more time.

At ten in the morning, Dave came to the gate of the castle. Mark and Jason were nearby, appearing to work on the robots. The guards opened the gate and Dave went in. He walked through the courtyard. Nobody was there. He came to the lobby. There was one robot there, guarding. He waited there for 20 mins. Then the door opened. He tried to peek inside, but just saw a dark hallway with dark carpet. Kevin came out.

﻿Kevin: Long time no see, Dave. What’s happening?

Dave: Kevin, I want to ask you one more time to review what you are doing. Look at yourself. Is this how dad would have wanted?

Kevin got irritated. He raised his voice.

Kevin: Dad was weak. That is why he wouldn’t have approved this. Because he didn’t have the power. When people have the power, they talk differently.

Dave: It’s a shame you told these about him. He wouldn’t have acted like you.

Kevin: Rubbish! Had he the power I have, he would have acted exactly the same way! Is this the BS you came to talk with me here?

Dave: No, I had another thing.

Just then the alarm started sounding and red lights flashing. Kevin looked at the screen on the wall. It had “Under Attack” flashing over a satellite map showing red dots around the castle. Kevin looked at Dave, who was standing without motion and looking curiously at the screen. Then the robot started moving towards the window, facing outside. There appeared what looked like flock of birds flying at very high speed. Kevin turned that direction, at which moment an explosion at the outer gate rocked the windows. A second later the “birds” started exploding into fiery balls, which made Kevin realize they were guided missiles that were being hit by the castle’s antimissile defenses. While the missiles exploded one by one, the bodyguard robot suddenly thrust itself in front of Kevin and opened its arms, as soon as which the window broke and the only two missiles that made through the defenses hit the robot. An almost simultaneous double explosion pursued and the robot’s compressed air tank in the back let out its air to counter the pressure in the front. This made Kevin fly across the room and slam to the drywall behind, while the robot also flew back with its front completely obliterated. The missiles were small but could easily take out a robot, or a person.

At this moment Dave, who had threw himself on the floor as soon as he saw the robot move in front of the window, got up and took out two metal spheres from his pocket. He threw them in the air and they started flying with air propulsion from 5 holes and one large hole for air intake. These were mini kamikaze drones. They had cameras and flew to the command center door and exploded, making a hole enough to squeeze in. Dave took out two more of them, they flew through the hole, and exploded on two robots that were right behind the door. Kevin was still unconscious. Dave took out his gun and started moving into the hallway. The hallway had a left turn before going straight to the main room. He talked to his phone saying “I’m in”. Mark replied “We are trying to hold the back. We are outnumbered”. Dave continued, he knew time was running out. He came to the main door. He put a C4 explosive and went behind the turn. It blew up in 2 mins. The door wasn’t affected. He went back and placed a cone with diamond pieces on the drilling end and an explosive on the other end that operated on similar mechanics of turbine engines. That one drilled a hole at the lock part and the door opened. He quickly pulled out his last drone and sent it in. It found a robot and exploded. He opened the door with caution. It was like a personal movie theatre with a single seat that was now broken. This must be the place Kevin gave the orders and talked with the brain. Either way, he was going to blow it up. Just then he heard a crash behind him and a robot running down the hallway. The robot peeked in. Dave drew out his gun and fired a couple rounds. Nothing happened. The robot was just staring at him. Kevin appeared behind the robot and said “Put your gun down Dave”. Dave didn’t put it down right away, but did lower it after a while. Other robots came. Kevin told them to take him.

Dave was locked in a room on the 15th floor of the original Matrix robotics skyscraper. The room had two layers of exterior windows that did not open. The first layer was 10 ft behind the second. As the regular skyscrapers were all demolished, this one was the only one, except for two camera towers that were about the height of the room. The room was guarded by two robots. Kevin later told him on the speaker that Mark had died in the battle. He didn’t tell anything else. Dave stayed there while thinking if he had done wrong by rebelling to his brother. Maybe he should have just joined him.

A week past like this. He had no idea what was going on. Then there was a commotion outside. He saw drones flying around. Two drones took guard at the two sides of the window. Suddenly he saw many dots in the sky. He knew what was coming. The dots started exploding like little firecrackers. There were hundreds of them, perhaps 300. They came closer and closer and suddenly the two drones in front of the window exploded and the windows shattered. A big shadow approached from outside. Through the broken windows a large quadcopter came in slowly. Its speakers said “Grab the bar”. Dave grabbed the bar in the middle. The drone started flying away. The drones outside stopped shooting at the quadcopter. Kevin had given directions not to kill Dave. They tried following it but were shot down by missiles coming from behind. The quadcopter was escorted by smaller drones towards north.

After a minute on the copter, Dave found bars that could support under his shoulders and he slid on those. The flight took 20 mins to the hills of Hayward. He landed next to a forested area and saw hundreds of robots under the trees. Peter came to greet him.

Peter: You must be tired. Come have a rest.

He took him to a tent where there was a large cushion for him to sit, A robot brought some tofu, bread, salad, baked potato and fruits for him to eat. As he was vegetarian it didn’t bring any sausage. He put a blanket on his shoulders.

Peter sat on a chair outside the tent to talk with him.

Dave: I thought you were not involved.

Peter: I was. Mark told me to stay behind in case they lost the battle. That way we would have a person inside. And hence we did.

Dave: So, you took the robots here?

Peter: Kevin was busy chasing Jason and his troops up north. They went all the way to Oregon border.

Peter continued: I took most of the air-to-air missiles with us and bombed the production lines. Therefore we will gain some time. Kevin doesn’t have too many air defenses, as we didn’t need it. He does have air to surface but our missiles take them out for now. But we know he is watching everything. There are satellites and highflying drones. He will soon assemble more robots from other places and fix the production line for more. Also, we will be running out of fuel soon. Same with Jason.

Dave: We must act fast. I have an idea.

After next day, they started moving inland towards Modesto. They were being attacked by air forces but their missiles worked. Peter and Dave were going in an armored vehicle. By night, they made it to the underground city construction site. There were clashes with robots at the front end, but they soon stopped. They decided to attack after two hours rest. They sent drones to find out where the drilling machine and the fuel tankers were.

They napped for half hour each. After two hours, they attacked with a blitz. First they surrounded the fuel tanker and protected it with aerial defense. Then they eliminated all other robots. Out of the 506 robots Peter had brought, 305 were remaining and missiles were down to 1500 from 19,000. They had eliminated 56 robots. They won the battle and Dave entered the underground city to meet the humans.

The city was being lit with candles. He held a flashlight and went in along with a robot. The flashlight lit the entire place very well. Although there were no plastic or metal, the place was not bad. It was more like a metro station. Then he heard a voice “Are you human?”. Dave yelled back “Yes, I am here to save you.” They came out of one of the meeting rooms. People were in dirty old clothes and very pale, but otherwise in well condition. They looked like villagers in old times. Once they learned what happened, they all cheered. Others came from deeper underground to join them. They all went above ground.

There were about 10,000 people. It took four hours to evacuate them all. One African American man came to shake Dave’s hand. “Thank you brother, God bless you.” he told with gratitude. He was a little older than Dave, about 65. Then he asked “What’s your name?”.

Dave: My name is Dave. How about yours?

Man: Michael, brother. I am Michael. You can call me Mike.

Dave: You sound familiar to me.

Mike: You too brother, you too.. that’s strange.

They told the people what they were trying to do. One thousand men volunteered to join the army. They had to find an alternative air defense as their missiles were running low. Dave thought of a phalanx formation with 9 robots using a shield made of parts from destroyed robots. They took the drill machine and started marching to the castle in Marine county, As the bridges were not safe to use, they had to march all the way through Napa valley. They informed Jason by radio and he started moving south with his robots.

﻿Headquarter forces continued to attack the group with air to surface missiles. The shields only reduced the damage. The 20ft tall robots holding them still lost their limbs and in some cases got completely destroyed. Nevertheless, the shields saved the lives of humans under them. As they reached Napa in two days they had lost 30% of the army, among them about 50 humans. The next day they approached the castle about 5 miles and the attacks intensified. Dave didn’t wait for Jason and ordered the 3 drilling machines in. They started drilling towards the castle. It would take a day to get there.

In 15 hours, Jason’s troops showed up 10 miles north. He still had 200 robots left, despite almost 2 weeks of battling. Considering he had escaped with 800, this was fortunate. As the drills approached the castle, Dave ordered two of them change directions towards the power plant that supplied the castle. The brain wouldn’t have guessed this. The drills reached the plant and detonated it. The hydrogen made a huge fire ball 2 miles west of the castle. Dave knew the castle had fuel reserve, but it would last only a day. The drill that was headed to the castle was destroyed by anti-drill torpedoes that the brain had manufactured recently. Howitzers started firing at them, but the missiles could easily take down the shells. But they were running low. They decided to make the assault the next day.

That night Mike came to Dave to talk with him, giving a salute.

Mike: Dave, it is you isn’t it?

Dave: Who?

Mike: Remember Money Mike?

Dave suddenly remembered the days almost 40 years ago.

Dave: Holy sht man, it’s you!

Mike: Yea man, it’s been 40 years or what?

Dave: Listen Mike, I did some bad things back then.

Mike: Don’t worry about it man. After you took them out, the entire north was mine. I got really rich for a while, until the frigin robots came. Anyway man, now you are my commander. It is good to see you.

Mike gave him a handshake and left. Next day human warriors were given hand grenades. They started the assault early morning at 6am when the air was brisk but foggy by the bay.

They approached and approached, sending the robots up front. They were finally left with only 50 of them. They sent kamikaze drones to breach the walls and finally did. They sent two robots through the hole and had them send pictures. But those robots got shot. They were out of robots to send, so they decided to go in with 25 humans. As they entered the breach, enemy drones flew by and shot 5 of them. The 20 entered the castle, including Dave and Mike. They went through the courtyard, and a robot started firing at them. Three of them got wounded, two of them died before they blew it with grenades. Then Dave saw Kevin on the other side of the courtyard. A battle ensued, Kevin was wounded from his arm. He retreated inside. They went in the castle. Dave knew where the brain was, in the ground. They had to cut its power. Dave told Mike that they had to blow up the generator. The generator was in the middle of the castle interior. Mike told Dave he could do it. He took 5 people with him. Dave went after Kevin. A booby trap exploded and left 7 wounded. He had only 8 left. Dave saw Kevin at the end of a hallway leading to a large room. They fired at each other. The robot was running out of ammo, Dave could tell. Suddenly two kamikaze drones came and exploded, taking out 6 more of Dave’s men. It was him and another one now. They chased Kevin into the room. They threw all

The grenades they had in there. After the smoke cleared, they went in. They saw the robot broken, but still moving a bit. Kevin was lying behind it against the wall. Dave pointed his gun at him. Kevin smiled. He talked with pain.

Kevin: Hello brother. You won. Congratulations.

Dave: I wish none of this happened.

Kevin: But it did. It had to. This is our fate.

Dave: Why didn’t you control your inner monkey?

Kevin: How can anyone pull himself out of a hole?

Dave: It is not too late, Kevin, just surrender.

Kevin: No. I am possessed. Just shoot me.

Dave looked at him with mercy. He stilled loved his brother.

Dave: Get out of here. They will blow it up in 20 mins.

Then Dave put his gun back. As they were heading back, they saw a man running in fear. They asked what happened. He said they were attacked by a robot on the way to the generator room. Three of them got wounded before they blew it. He and Mike were the only ones left. Mike told him to go get help and went into the generator room himself. He was going to do a suicide attack. Just then they heard and felt a loud explosion. They knew it was time to go. The generator was destroyed so the brain was using the backup battery. As soon as they reached the courtyard, Dave called Jason from his watch.

Dave: The generator is gone. Brain has 2 hours of battery supply. Then it will order its robots to do suicide attacks.

Jason: We were able to make another breach. I will send a team to plant a small nuclear bomb.

Dave: Give them 40 mins to evacuate humans, before detonating it.

Jason: Okay

They got three of the injured men from the courtyard and left the castle walls. They were walking slowly and one of them was watching out for attacks. Commotions were concentrated at the other end of the castle. The fueling station for the enemy robots exploded by bombs planted by humans. Just then they saw a swarm of drones flying their way from south and east. These were the drones coming from Mexico and East Coast. It had taken them a week to reach there. Drones from West Coast had been all taken out by the rebels already.

Meanwhile, deep in the castle Kevin got up from where he was sitting. He walked across the room. His leg was broken, so he was limping. At the door, he leaned against the wall and looked thoughtful. Then he smiled bitterly and sat back on the floor, waiting for his fate. Dave and the two others were each helping a limping man to get away. There was a hill they had to climb. In 10 mins they walked no more than 200 hundred feet away from the castle when a huge explosion shook the ground and the whole castle blew into a fireball. Dave was sad to see it.

Dave video called Jason again.

Dave: What the hell was that? I told you to wait 40 mins!

Jason: We had no choice. The support units are 5 mins away.

Dave dropped the call and looked at the horizon. He saw the flock of drones about 15 miles away East and South. As the brain was destroyed, they didn’t have an idea which humans were the enemies. In the South they had begun attacking the city where the engineers lived. In East they continued to come their way. About 200 humans had been left in the battlefield. All ran for cover.

The drones went around searching for humans, but couldn’t find any. They stayed in hiding for 12 hours. The drones started landing because they had no fuel left. Next morning, they carefully approached the grounded drones and detonated them with machine gun fire. The battle was over.

**Part 17: End of human control**

After the battle, there were few battle robots left. The remainder of the robots around the world was still in active mode, with the last orders given by the brain before it was destroyed. They were set to attack back wherever threatened. The food deliveries to cities stopped. When humans came out of the cities to look for food they got attacked by the robots. However, now the robots did not know where to search. As several humans escaped the fire and went to the woods or hills nearby, the robots merely chased after them until they lost sight. They couldn’t think what the humans were up to. They were like rogue squadrons without higher command. Eventually a decent number of humans escaped to nearby hills and caves. They made plans to take out the robots in different ways, for example making them chase them to a trap, or rolling a boulder on them, or attacking the fuel tankers. Within the next few weeks a big portion of the robots were being destroyed.

Meanwhile, Dave and others had meetings to discuss the next steps. They dispatched their existing robots to different parts of the West Coast to help liberate human cities. This way they could appear as liberators. With the help of their robots 15 cities were liberated. They used their robots to tell the residents they were rescuers, not oppressors. Residents were told that more help was on the way and they could start farming and building homes for themselves now. Means of communication was provided to them.

The other cities, however, got liberated on their own and started to look for the culprits. They knew the center was Matrix city. However, with no modern technology it would be hard to get there. Some groups formed armed forces and started marching towards the “capital”. Many engineer and their families of Matrix city left the city. During the last battle, some 50 residents had died due to the rogue drones attacking them but the city still had 25,000 residents. After the exodus, only 10,000 remained. In the days when Kevin was leading, the residents didn’t have to worry much about anything. Now that there was no king, no brain, and not many robots to protect the city, it was a dangerous place to be.

Dave and others knew the only way to establish law and order was to restore the robot army. They also had to reactivate the food supply chain, as humans would soon start starving otherwise. The guilt of a worldwide famine would be too much to carry. If they just left the city and gave up, sooner or later they would be made to pay for their crimes. They had to re-establish connection to the robots. In 4 weeks they were able to establish connection with the satellites. Orders were sent to whatever robots left in the world to stop fighting. Humans were informed through speakers that the battle was over and robots would now serve them instead of attack. All people around the world were happy.

People in Matrix city were still nervous of a coup. Even if the march of the rebel groups to the city had ceased, in a matter of couple of years people would come to their senses and ask for their technologies back. They had to decide between opening up and helping humans restore life as before and continuing to restrict the technology and let them be dependent. The council led by the “generals” of the battle, Dave, Jason, and Peter, discussed the options. This was going to determine the fate of Matrix city and all its residents.

The meetings were done in a conference room. The three governors were sitting at desks on the stage and the other 20 board members were at the audience seats. Jason started: “We see that we have to help the people restore their food and health supply but it would be dangerous to give them all their technologies back. Do we all agree?” Someone from audience raised hand and spoke, “Sir, I think we need to embrace the world and run elections. We cannot continue living this way. It is wrong. We can tell them we liberated the city and we are not the perpetrators of the previous events.”

Jason: You do realize that many people know us by face?

Dave: They know us but not them.

Jason: Well, if we are caught because of you, we are going to tell them you were one of the masterminds. How would that be?

Speaker: I think we are being cynical here. People will understand the former power struggles and forgive us for our wrongdoing.

Peter: I disagree. I think we should vote.

Jason: Yes, let’s start the voting.

The voting took place and the result was to continue the basic support to people but keep the high technology in Matrix city. Actions were taken to deliver medical and food supplies. Soon people around the world constructed cities above ground. Courts and governments were formed. The world looked like made of city-states as in ancient Greece, this time supported by robots. Other than robots, there weren’t much of modern technology. No electricity, no guns, no vehicles. Some people went hunting with spears and arrows to get meat. Houses were made of stones and wood. Water was obtained from rivers.

At Matrix city, the robot assembly lines were being rebuilt. Also, the brain was being reconstructed. Matrix city was mostly inhabited by engineers and their families. There were political divisions, particularly between Dave, Jason, and Peter. Each had their followers among the engineers that worked with them. However, as engineers were mellow, there were no armed rebel groups. The politics was more like in a big high-tech company. So long as the upper management agreed on what to do, the remainder would follow the orders.

Dave usually worked with his group of engineers for rebuilding the brain. Peter was a liaison between his department and the communication system. They sometimes had conversations about personal life. One day Peter said, “I heard about the note your dad gave Kevin before he passed away. Kevin never told what was on that note. I am very curious. Could you let me know?”. Dave said “Nothing really that important. He gave some suggestions about how to make a general intelligence and fusion reactor, things that we know very well today. He also had ideas on how to make it all happen, like where we are today”.

Peter: You mean Kevin started the group because of your father’s note?

Dave: Partially. Jason and Kevin were classmates and had a Kaggle team already. They just built on that.

Peter: So that was all, just the few ideas on technology and starting a group?

Dave: It was actually deeper than that. There was a philosophical conclusion. Probably you will understand it.

Peter: I would love to hear it.

Dave: The note said, “Only the immortal can be noble.”

Peter: I can’t say I understand that.

Dave: It is that, Peter. Whatever it means, but its implications are profound.

Peter: Do you believe we are on the right path?

Dave: I think so. Why should I believe otherwise?

Peter paused for a while and then said, “I am sorry for what happened to your brother. I think things will get better. I have to go to the communications department now. See you.”

Shortly after this conversation, Peter’s role switched to a different department. Dave felt lonelier than before. He now did not have a brother. He had broken up with Tasha two years after Matrix city was built. He used to see Jason and Peter as friends, but he now felt Jason was power hungry and Peter was his sidekick. They often had meetings without inviting Dave, and Dave did not like that. While he knew they would not upset him since he was leading the project to rebuild the brain, he did not know how he would be treated afterwards. While Dave and others worked hard to build a new quantum computer, Jason and others were giving parties with their close friends. Clara, Kevin’s ex-wife was with them.

Seemingly, engineers and managers at Matrix city had good intentions. However, Dave could feel Jason had other ambitions. He could see how he had a close circle of friends and most of them were of the same race. This became more obvious in time. Eventually they started to ignore Dave and started making decisions without him. Dave showed his discontent with the situation, but they became more and more audacious about it.

Dave was hearing some rumors, rumors about a worldwide IQ test to determine who to breed. Probably all that Jason, Peter and the rest of the geeks thought they were among the geniuses in the world. He was losing his connection with the human race completely. The others felt this too. Even his team members stopped talking with him other than technical subjects. His disgust grew more by the day. It was a disgust he couldn’t control anymore. He tried to focus on the duty at hand. What did his father’s note say? That last sentence in the note his brother showed him was “Life needs a shepherd whose only life is growing the grass and its sheep.” These words now appeared much clearer to him. From the beginning, Matrix labs had focused on the first part, which was “Life needs a shepherd”. However, the second part was where the main idea was “whose only life is growing the grass and its sheep.” Dave understood what his father meant. He understood, yet he felt angry towards him. Was he not a human too? Why expect him to be so selfless? Why curse him with such a duty?

One night, when Dave was sleeping home by himself, he saw a dream. They were in a room high at the peak of a mountain. The house seemed as if floating in the sky. It was a sunny day and the inside of the room was bright. It was like a vacation house, with a small dining room combined with the kitchen. They were all young, like before his dad, Aaron, passed away. He was playing a game with his dad. They were laughing. His mom was preparing breakfast. The scene gave him happiness and comfort. His father suddenly said, “Alright, now it is time to do your work.” His mom suddenly looked irritated. “Don’t bother what he says. He is sick. He doesn’t know what he is saying.” Dave then realized his dad was sick. He felt pity for his dad. He couldn’t bear this sight. He felt the breeze from the door behind him. He turned back and looked out the door. He saw a mirage of a Roman style swimming pool right in front of it. There, Clara was in the water, her elbows at the edge of the pool. She was smiling at him and inviting him there. Others were playing at the other end of the pool. He took a step forward, the image of the pool started to disappear. He took another step, the image erased more. Then he came to the edge and looked at the abyss below. The breeze got cooler. He turned back. His parents were gone. However, there standing was his brother, looking at him silently. He was crying, tears started running down his cheeks. Dave felt deep agony. Suddenly someone hit him in the back of his head. He turned around to see the current old himself. He started to fight. They rolled over to the edge of the door. His old self was choking him. Suddenly he pulled himself towards the door. One of them fell, he couldn’t tell which one but he felt like falling, then he woke up.

As Dave worked harder to get the new brain completed, he became more and more isolated. He was in a dreamlike state. It felt like this was the only cure for his troubles within. This was his medicine. He concentrated on his work.

For one year, almost every day, Dave worked in the lab by himself along with assistant robots. He built a rectangle-shaped robot that resembled Jabba the Hutt. It was about 10ft tall. He also built a bigger version of Next. He worked on other several pieces. Others did not question him much. They were only interested in seeing the new brain completed.

Dave asked for the new brain to be located in a tower similar to the CN building. Others opposed to this at first but Dave convinced them saying this would be the safest construction. In few months the tower was completed. A ceremony was to be held for the inauguration of the new brain. They all gathered at the tower. Dave, Clara, Peter, Jason, and one more engineer called James were the ones present in the tower. Others were outside at the base.

This was the big day. The new brain would be connected to the satellite and allowed to get accustomed to the system. Then it would gather control of the robots around the world and guide the local governments in protecting the environment and implementing one-child policy. The world would be a green and clean, modern paradise for humans to live in. Food and space would be equally shared, and everyone would have a chance to do what they wanted. But just then Jason took out a gun and pointed it to Dave.

Jason: Dave, before we plug it in, could you please give me the access to the source code?

Dave looked at him with little surprise.

Dave: Why the rush? You know you will have a login once it is online.

Jason then pulled out a pistol.

Jason: Please don’t make it hard for us.

Dave: What is this about?

Jason: We are taking it over from here. James can figure out how to reset the login. You can follow us downstairs.

Dave: So, what are you going to do? Become the ruler of the world?

Jason: That is not our goal, Dave. We are going to genetically engineer the superior human beings. This will be the day of a new beginning for the entire universe.

Dave: Sounds good. Why didn’t you tell me?

Jason: Because we don’t like you. I am sorry to say.

Dave: Let me guess. These new humans are going to be white.

Jason: Good guess. Obviously, since all this civilization is thanks to us.

Dave: So that’s the way it is eh? And you, Clara, you are with these people?

Clara: That is the future, Dave. You should have just done what they said.

Dave started nodding his head while clenching his teeth. He turned to Jason again.

Dave: You have the balls to rule the world, mofo?

Jason: I don’t need to hear this anymore, get moving or I am going to have to pull the trigger.

Dave: If you are ruling the world, you need to be ready to die. Are you ready to die you fkers?

James: You should ask that to yourself idiot.

Dave: Very well. Very well. Here is the password. The Way of the Future!

As soon as he uttered these words an explosion shook the building. Jason yelled “Noooo” and fired his gun. The bullet hit Dave in the chest but missed his heart. The tower started tilting. The view from the windows slipped by as if they were in a train. Jason saw was Dave winking and sending a kiss at him. Within 10 seconds of the explosion, they crashed.

People at the base had run from the way of the falling tower. Right after the crash, all robots froze. People looked curiously at the rubbles. Within ten minutes, they heard robot steps. They saw robots approaching. People got out of their way. The first one was Next. He cut right through the crowd to the site of the crash. He found Dave in the rubbles and held him in his arms. The other robot was coming slowly. This one was huge, around 20ft. It looked like a dragon with tentacles. They rushed out of its way. Its name was Genghis.

Genghis came to the site, besides Next. He watched as Next held Dave in his arms. From the rubbles nearby, a voice came. “Help me..” It was Peter. Genghis went to him, knelt down, and brought his snake-like head close to Peter’s mouth as if to listen what he was saying. Peter repeated “Help..”. Genghis got up and said “For sure, Sir”. He then held Peter’s body with two tentacles and bit off his head. He spat the severed head back on the body and said “You are welcome”. Some people from the crowd screamed and ran away. Next took Dave’s body and walked 30 miles south. He came to a redwood forest; he laid his body on the ground, then dug a grave with his hands and placed Dave’s body there. He later filled the grave and knelt beside it for hours.

**Part 18: The age of deceit**

For a second time, the robots in the world were motionless, since the second brain had been blown up as well. People again tried to establish an order within them. However, this time the robots came back onboard within 3 weeks. A giant screen was installed at every city, where announcements would be made.

The first announcements came 2 months after the installation of the screens. In Texas, the announcement was made by a man that looked like Colonel Sanders of KFC. He talked seriously but with excitement:

“Citizen of America! We have finally defeated the evil terrorists who tried to subjugate the people. All these years, they used the system hijacked by our very own Mr. Ted, the founder of Matrix labs that was originally established to create a safe, prosperous, and comfortable world!”

Tens of thousands of people were gathered in front of the TV screens. Each city had enough screens for everyone to see. Videos of terrorists, who looked Middle Eastern, kidnapping Ted and throwing him to the ocean, were shown. Then the terrorists were using robots to attack people and crush them alive. The audience watched in terror.

The KFC man continued: For years, these scums imprisoned you into underground cities, they fed you with the worst food and let you live in poverty, all for the purpose of entertaining their savage desires. You probably didn’t notice these monsters taking some of your women and raping them, sometimes in gangs, and later torturing them to death. Yes, all these things unfortunately happened.

Some images of men whipping naked white women in chains appeared on the screens. People were getting angry with this.

The man continued: Later these savages had a power struggle within themselves, as is usual with backwards nations, and split into two groups. In the midst of this fighting almost three years ago, as you remember, the robots lost control. You were able to destroy many of them with your ingenuity. Most other nations around the world were too scared that they stayed in their underground cities, except those in ME. Those shthole ME countries became more luxurious than ever. They flew women to their liking to their countries. They had four wives and over ten children each. They lived the life of kings, all the while letting you live like rats!

People started booing and getting stirred.

The man continued: One group of savages defeated the other and had them all killed terribly. They let you come over ground because they had worse plans. Soon, they were going to kill everyone except the young girls they chose. We had to do something to stop them. I am Colonel Jason and these are the brave commanders of our independence war.

A group of white men were standing behind Colonel Jason. They were wearing uniforms.

Colonel Jason:  Finally, my dear fellows, we have defeated those terrorist rats. From now on, you will live in freedom! But rest assured, we will punish those who could have stopped this but have instead chose to benefit from the distress of good people. We will be taking back what is ours and showing them their place. What goes around comes around. God Bless America!

People cheered and shouted “God Bless America”. This was the case in Texas. People didn’t start hurting those who looked ME because there were still robot police around, but they did give them dirty looks. The hate was brewing.

In ME countries, a similar message was aired, however it was a slightly different version and was delivered by a ME looking man.

The presenter: Brother and sisters, for centuries we have been oppressed by the crusaders. They invaded our lands, they took our oil. In the last 30 years, these have come to the point of trapping you underground.

“You are still the lucky ones. In other places they raped our women and crucified our brave men. Finally, three years ago, some of the brave engineers that had Muslim ancestors went on strike and demanded that you be brought above ground. However, the devils did this temporarily, as they were building concentration camps to gas you all alive!

But then our brave engineers secretly reprogrammed the robots in ME, so they liberated you. May Allah bless them! They are now working underground at a secret location, feared of being assassinated by the enemy drones. We are still in danger of being attacked by the crusaders. We will continue our struggle until the entire world is liberated and becomes as one! Allah-u Akbar!

Everyone was ecstatic and chanted “Allah-u Akbar”. Similar messages appeared all over the world but delivered slightly differently and by somebody that looked local. This pattern continued all around the world. The changes to their way of life started the next day.

﻿Next day the leaders of the cities were taken to mobile offices by the robot police. There they were given instructions on what to do through the presenters and ministers shown on the screens the day before. In Midwest and East Coast, those who identified as white were chosen whereas in ME those who identified as Muslim, and everywhere in the world the leaders were chosen to reflect the identity of the majorities.

In the meeting offices, which looked like regular presidential offices with teleconference screens, leaders were instructed to segregate their community based on race, religion, sect, or class. Low-income housing was to be built for the minorities and luxury residences for majorities. Guns and some basic technology were to be allowed for the majorities. The minorities, on the other hand, had to live in wooden houses and had to abide by one child policy.

So, the age of segregation started. The majority had a prosperous life, although they were still subject to two-child policy, had travel restriction, and didn’t have access to much more technology than electric lamps and running faucets. Their communities were not too far apart, divided merely by a wide dirt road. Farmland was assigned to each community. In a year or so, the robots weaned them off the main food supply and instead had them grow it themselves. The minorities were not allowed to raise livestock, however. They had to become vegetarian, whereas the majorities had permission for two kinds of livestock and also were delivered exotic fruits and vegetables.

This went on several years. In 3 years the local leadership was replaced with the most bigoted ones. They preached the people regularly about how they had saved their people from the evil ones and how everyone was better off now. The minorities watched this on their side from big screen at the center. Eventually they started to resent their rulers.

**Part 19: Satisfaction of ego**

Eduardo came back home from playing soccer. His mom was cooking and his dad was lying on the couch. It was after sunset and his mom had lit three candles and that was enough to light up the 200 sqft kitchen plus living room. His mom, Miranda, looked at him with worry.

“I hope you didn’t sweat too much. If you catch cold, it will be hard to recover.” she said.

Eduardo said, “I will be fine mom. Stop worrying about me.”

His mom said, “Your dad was saying that too. You see how he is now. Hasn’t been able to work for weeks. Fortunately the neighbors still give us some of their shares.”

Eduardo: Mom, I got a case of wheat by carrying bags for the Castillos.

Melinda: Oh Eduardo, you think that was a lot? It lasted us only one meal. The less we eat the harder for your dad to go back to work and harder for us to live. We need to find a solution, son.

Eduardo: How about I go work in the field?

Melinda: They won’t let you. They only allow the senior man of the house, if he is still alive. Eduardo, how about you get Jesus and the others and go ask some food from the other side?

Eduardo: Okay mom, I will.

Next day Eduardo met with his friends and they agreed to go and ask some food. They weren’t sure if they could pass the robots but they would try. They started walking to the other side of the town. They got to the dirt road. There were two robots patrolling on the road. They dashed across when they were not looking their way. They were now in the rich neighborhood. The houses were big and luxurious. Not many people were walking around and no vehicles were there since they were not allowed. They saw a woman pushing a cart and approached her. Eduardo said “Good evening ma’am.” The woman was surprised and afraid. “Hello?” She said with a timid voice. “We do not mean any harm. Just wanted to ask a question.” Said Eduardo. Woman was a little relieved “Sure, go ahead.”

Eduardo: We are very poor and have hardly anything to eat. You don’t have to give anything if you don’t want to, but we were wondering, could we help you push the cart for just a little bit of food, maybe a bag of rice?” The woman saw their skinny bodies and felt sorry for them. She agreed.

After they reached the house, under the stares of people walking around, the woman gave them 3 bags of rice and one bag of flour. That night Eduardo happily showed his mom what he got. They were all very happy. So, Eduardo and his friends went there again next day to look for merciful people. However, the next day they were rejected by most people. Only one old woman allowed them to do some garden work in exchange for some peanuts. This time was not as successful.

Eduardo, Luis and his 3 other friends decided to wait a couple days and go to find the lady they helped the first time. In the meantime, people on the other side were talking between them about the beggars that came from the other side of town. They started getting worried.

In two days Eduardo and his friends went again. They waited at a corner and found the woman pushing her cart again. They went to her and said hello. This time the woman was a little bit irritated, but she accepted their help. As they were pushing the cart, Luis and the others opened some of the bags and started stealing items. Eduardo was in the front next to the woman and didn’t notice it. Once they arrived, the woman gave them two cases of wheat and told them she was running out of food too. They thanked her and parted.

On the way Luis took out a potato and an apple from his pocket and said, “Look what I got!” with a grin on his face. The others also took things out. Eduardo was surprised. He said “But that woman helped us, why did you steal from her?”. Luis said “Shut up. You are weak. We need it we got it, okay?” The others laughed and told things like “Loser” and “Idiot”. Then Luis said, “That’s why your family poor like that. It runs in the family.”

Eduardo got mad at this.

Eduardo: You can’t talk like that about my family!

Luis: Whatcha gonna do btch?

Eduardo stared at them. They were all grinning. He didn’t want to get in a fight and make things worse. He walked back to home, disgruntled. At home, he saw his mom.

Miranda: Did you get anything?

Eduardo: No, nothing today.

Then Eduardo went outside, because he couldn’t bare the guilt. Just then, a small spherical drone came to him. He was frightened for a moment, because drones or robots didn’t come to this part of the town.

The drone said “Hello, Eduardo. We have been watching you.” Eduardo kept silent while looking at the drone.

Drone continued: Those kids who bullied you, you should have stood up. They are not as tough as they appear. It just takes one punch to scare them away.

Eduardo shrugged his shoulders.

Drone continued: Listen, we want you to beat them. Next time you meet them, ask them to give the stolen items back. If they scold your family again, go punch one and see what happens. Don’t be scared, we got your back. But do not mention about us. Okay?

Eduardo said “Okay”. Then the drone flew away.

Next day Eduardo saw the 4 kids in the yard, playing soccer with 6 others. He went to them and said “Luis, I need those things that you guys stole yesterday.”

Luis kicked the ball aside and stared angrily at Eduardo. He said “Get the hell out of here, moron. Go back to your loser mom and dad.”

Eduardo went straight towards Luis and punched him in the face. Luis fell down. Everyone looked at Eduardo in terror. Luis looked at Eduardo from the ground and push himself backwards. Then Eduardo turned around and told all of them “I need those items immediately! Go get them before I kick your asses! Bring them here and leave them next to the field!”

Then he turned back sternly and walked away under the stares of the other 10.

﻿Later that evening the ten kids showed up 20 yards from Eduardo’s home with sticks and torches in their hands. Luis called out t Eduardo “Hey, shface, come outside if you have the balls.”  
  
 Eduardo saw them and went outside although his mom tried to stop him. He went straight to the group and yelled “Waccha got btchs?!” Someone went behind Eduardo and hit him in the back of his head. Eduardo fell on the ground. Upon that, all the kids went towards him, hitting and kicking him all over. All this happened in a few seconds.  
  
 After a minute, Eduardo’s mom ran outside screaming “Nooo, nooo, please don’t hit him!” The group dispersed when she was 10 ft from them. They all started walking back home as his mom fell on her knees next to Eduardo, who wasn’t moving. His mom said “Eduardo, Eduardo, can you hear me?”. There was no answer. Eduardo was covered in blood and was not breathing. He was dead.  
  
 Eduardo’s mom held the boy to her chest and started crying. She cries there for 10 mins. Neighbors came by to talk to her. Just then, a small ambulance came. Two robots got out of it and while people watched, they picked the kid up and took off, without a word.  
  
 A week passed without any news from Eduardo. His mom was waiting anxiously. After one week, a van came and stopped on the dirt road. Out came a robot and then Eduardo in very good shape. He immediately ran to his house and opened the door. His mom was thrilled to see him! “They cured you! Thank god!” She said. He hugged his mom and ill dad. Then he said, “They are not letting me go yet. There will be a trial.” and he left with the robot.  
  
 More police vans came and 10 robots dispersed into the town, later coming back with the ten kids. They all left immediately after the last one was rounded up. They took them over the hills, beyond some farmlands, towards fields that used to be farmlands but were now dried up barren lands without any irrigation. There was a small mobile office there.  
  
 They parked the vans, took the kids out of it and made them sit on the field in a semi-circle, with Eduardo at one end. It was a sunny March day, but it was getting cold towards sunset. They sat there without a sound for 2 hours. Two hours after sunset, a big police robot came. They thought it might be the chief officer, and it was. The chief said “Stand up.” They all got up.  
  
 The other police robots set a big fire at the center of the semi-circle using branches and dried wheat stems. After another 2 hours, at the distance they saw a rocket land. Its light went out as soon as it landed. They waited looking that way. After 10 mins, they started seeing the reflection of the fire off a big metal device coming their way.  
  
 As the metal device approached they saw that it was a giant robot of 20ft tall that looked like a dinosaur in some way, a praying mantis in another way, and an octopus in yet another way. It had 5 tentacles on each side, it walked upright on two elephant legs, and sported a human-sized head on a long neck like that of diplodocus. This was Genghis.  
  
 As Genghis approached, with two officer robots on his two sides, they saw his eyes that looked like a human’s although on a head like a snake’s. They took their eyes off his eyes out of immense fear. Genghis walked to the side of the fire while they followed his legs.  
  
 “Y’all look at me!” he roared. “Who is the plaintiff here?”  
 Nobody raised his. He yelled again “I’m gonna ask one more time. Who is the accuser?”  
 Eduardo shyly raised his hand.  
 Genghis came close to him. He told him to get closer to the middle and asked “Who was the first to hit you?”  
 Eduardo pointed at Luis. Genghis asked again “Who else hit you hardest?”  
 Eduardo pointed at two other kids. He was started feeling powerful.  
 Then Genghis turned to the others.  
 “Do you all know why you are here?” he shouted.  
 They lowered their looks and nodded their heads.  
 “You, tell me!” Genghis told Luis.  
 Luis: We beat him up.  
 Genghis: No you stupid fk! You killed him!  
  
 They all looked confused but didn’t raise their looks. Genghis continued while pacing right and left in front of them, “Now, do you think I care if this guy lives or not?”  
  
 Genghis continued after a pause: Do you think anything would change in this world had he not resurrected?  
  
 Eduardo seemed uneasy by this remark. Genghis made a gesture and a cop robot brought a small jar. Genghis carefully held it between two tentacles and gave it to Luis. He said “Open this thing.”  
  
 Luis did as said. Inside was a cricket.  
  
 Genghis: Now squish that bug with your finger.  
  
 Luis paused. Genghis yelled “Do it!”. Luis did it.  
  
 Then Genghis opened his tentacles and looked to the sky and around. “Did anything happen?” he asked silently.  
  
 Genghis: Nothing happened! Is that a surprise or what?  
  
 Then he laughed a wicked laugh and continued “No, I am not here because you hurt this goose here.”  
  
 Genghis: The real reason you are here right now is because you are pretending to be innocent!  
  
 Genghis pulled one of the boys to the middle using two of his tentacles. He said “Look at him, how innocent, how well behaving he looks!”  
 The five officer robots present “laughed”.  
  
 Genghis: But you were not so innocent a week ago, were you? So, why are ‘t you evil now?  
  
 He turned to the rest of them and yelled:  
 “Why are you fags not defiant? Where are your egos now dickheads?”  
  
 Then he turned away from them whilst mumbling “Fkin hypocrites” to face Eduardo again.  
 Genghis: And you. Tell me nice boy, why did they beat you up?  
 Eduardo: Because I asked that they give back what they stole from an old lady.  
 Genghis: So, you were trying to be a nice guy. Then tell me, are your friends in need of food?  
 Eduardo said “Yes” in trembling voice.  
 Genghis: Then what’s the problem of stealing?  
  
 Eduardo couldn’t say anything.  
 Genghis: Let me tell you something, in your world, nice kids either cower forever or stand up and get beat to death. Do you know why?  
 Eduardo shook his head to say no.  
 Genghis: Because civilization is for cowards!

Genghis then went back to Luis and put his tentacle on his shoulder.  
 Genghis: Look! Look at this guy. His family was in need, so he stole some things. Is there anything wrong with that?  
 They didn’t know what to say so they kept silent.  
 Genghis all of a sudden yelled “Answer me!”  
 They all said “No”.  
 Genghis: That’s right. It is called natural selection. The survival of the toughest, strongest, and smartest. Right?  
 Everyone said “Yes”.  
 Meanwhile Genghis’ another tentacle went to Luis hand. He held his hand as if shaking it. Then he looked at Luis and pulled his hand abruptly. Luis gave out a scream and his hand tore off his arm. Luis collapsed to the ground and rolled on his severed arm in agony.

Genghis continued calmly like nothing happened: And so it happens that, you are not the strongest species any more. You see, civilization works only when everyone is nice.

Then Genghis wrapped another two tentacles around Luis’ body and lifted him up 10 ft in the air. Genghis yelled “This is what we do with assholes in our civilization.” He suddenly tossed Luis straight into the fire. At the sight of this, six of the kids started running away. Genghis caught the second most notorious kid and bit off his head. Then all scattered. Seeing that no one was stopping them, they ran into the darkness.

Genghis tossed the headless body he was holding into the fire as well, turned to Eduardo who was in shock, and smiled with blood dripping from his metal mouth. Genghis patted him on the head and walked away in the direction he came.

Eduardo waited there for several more hours. It was getting chilly. He heard coyotes howling. The fire was still burning and although the robot police were standing lifeless on the side they gave him security. The coyotes were howling in the direction in which the kids had escaped. Eduardo shivered.

After some time, the police robots took Eduardo back to the town. He went to his home and told nobody about what happened. A week passed. More and more poor people crossed the border to the rich district to steal things. The armed guards from the rich side came to Eduardo’s neighborhood to search for the thieves. They rounded up several dozen boys, among them Eduardo.

At the rich district, they had set up courts. A judge listened to the witnesses as they testified on the witness stand. The fat lady was there. The judge asked “Do you see any of the thieves among the suspects?” The woman said “Yes! That boy there.” She pointed at Eduardo. Eduardo stood up and yelled, “No, I did not..” but the guards covered his mouth to silence him at once. They punched his stomach. The judge ruled, “All convicts are to receive 100 lashes on the back!”  
  
Years passed and similar horrific events happened all over the world. In ME people were living in shady neighborhoods. There was no transportation. Food deliveries were made by carts pulled by animals. In 5 years the society had gone back 1000 years. Just as in middle ages, gold coins restarted to be used. Nobody remembered the modern ways of living. In fact, all traces of technology had been erased. Robots had seemingly disappeared, and while people remembered them, they stopped thinking where they went. Day to day life had them all brainwashed.  
  
The government started taxing them on the pretext of war with West. The mayors were becoming kings, living in big palaces. The new kings sent men to the streets to look for beautiful young women and then offered to buy them from their families in exchange of large sums. In time, they started going after teenagers.

One day, a very pretty girl who looked about 14 years old was selling fruits at the bazaar when two of king’s men were around. They saw this girl and went to her. One of them, a tall man with a pointy beard, started talking to her “Hey beauty, how are you?”  
Girl: l’m good thanks. Would you like some fruits?  
Pointy beard: Yes, but not the ones on the counter.  
The other man, who was shorter and chubby giggled.  
Girl: I don’t have anything different anywhere else.  
Pointy beard: Tell me, who is your daddy?  
Girl: He passed away. I am orphan.  
Pointy beard: Ohh, that is sad sweetie. I think the king can help you. Let’s go to the palace.  
They went to the palace where they appeared in front of the king, who had a big belly and a pointy beard, and was sitting at the throne.  
Pointy beard: Your majesty, this lady is having hardship. She is here to ask for your mercy.  
King came down his thrown.  
King: A very lovely girl indeed. What’s your name?  
Girl: Alyssa  
King: Ohh, Christian eh?  
Girl: Yes your majesty.  
King: Alyssa, why don’t you be my guest here for a couple of days?  
Girl: I have to go back to my home to take care of my mom, Sir.  
King: We will take care of her, do not worry.  
King made a gesture and the two men left.  
King: Come with me Alyssa.  
King took her to the throne. He sat on it, then he made Alyssa sit on his lap.  
King: Are you comfortable dear.  
Alyssa: No, Sir.  
King got surprised.  
King: Why not, Alyssa?  
Alyssa: I don’t like this. I want to leave.  
Then she got up.  
King: Wait, where you think you are going?  
King held her hand, but Alyssa continued to walk. She got free of the King and started running for the door. King yelled “Guards!”  
Guards came out behind the pillars and closed the gate. Alyssa froze in front of the door.  
The king approached her from behind. Suddenly Alyssa began to laugh. The king and two guards were shocked. Then what appeared to be two snakes started coming from underneath her skirt. King backed up and told the guards “Kill her!”

The guards drew their swords and were about to hit her when the snakes sprang off the floor and wrapped around their necks. As they got suffocated Alyssa turned around, white of her eyes glowing red. With a robotic voice she said “I told you not to abuse the power you fktard!” The king trembled and said “I am sorry your highness, please forgive me.” Alyssa said “Okay, sob. Lie down”. She walked to the trembling king, slowly pushed him down on the floor, and, with a single stomp, crushed the king’s head like a shell of a snail.

Meanwhile, some cities in Midwest was divided into 3 parts: whites, blacks, and colored. When this happened right after the liberation, it felt natural for the white folks. This was how it was supposed to be. In time, with the limited technology, the life became similar to that in 1950s. The three communities were given separate fields to work on to grow their food, but only whites were given advanced tools. This system worked fine for the first 3-4 years.

In year 5, a drought happened and the river that brought their water almost dried out. The white population had enough supplies to last them through the next year, but the others were running out. In time, the colored folk started providing services to the whites in exchange of food. Blacks in turn started providing help at the fields of the colored.

In couple months, the harvest turned out so low, they all had to go to white folks to beg. While whites gave some food to the colored, they despised the blacks. In some cases, they had their own security forces beat the beggars up.

After some time, white folks also ran low on food and the automated deliveries became scarce. Now they had no meat left and were about to fall to the same level as the others. However, since they had better tools, they could harvest slightly more food.  
In time, the white leadership asked the other community leaders to let the whites work their lands. That way the production could be doubled and whites would take some of the surplus. The other leaders agreed, with the offer of some cheese and rice, and the lands were given to the management of the whites.

The colored and black people continued to work on their fields under the guidance of the whites and their technology. In time, they did get more harvest, but not double. It was merely fifty percent more. Initially they split the surplus evenly, but whites started imposing rules on the communities. Some black folk started looting stores due to hunger. As a result, whites took over their entire surplus. Then, whites also lowered the pay for services that colored people provided. Turned out colored people were making just as much as before but now whites were getting surplus from their fields.

In time, food stocks went lower. Then, the delivery trucks came and for the first time in many months brought sausages. However, the sausages had labels that said 80% pork, 20% black. The whites initially were hesitant to touch it. Then a handful of families took some. The others saw the ones eating the sausage getting better at work, so they started to get some. Soon, many of them were eating it.

After some time, the percentage went to 60% black, 40% pork. The whites continued to take the deliveries. They were even waiting in line early morning to get them. Sausage became a trade item. Some colored people even took them.  
 Eventually, the percentage went to 90% black, 10% colored. Some whites stopped eating them. Others continued. There were clashes between the communities. Eventually, whites took over the entire city with their armed guards, and the society became the same as pre-emancipation, or more horrific. Not only blacks were whipped, the ones whites gave capital punishment were slaughtered and sold in pieces.

This was reflected to the public in ME as Christians torturing and cooking fellow Muslims. Public was infuriated. Angry mobs attacked Christian neighborhoods, set churches on fire, beat Christian men and raped their women. Even Muslims that dressed up in pious cloths but had European features like blonde hair were attacked. The local rulers did not do anything about it. In fact, they were happy about the captured Christian girls presented for their harems.

Alyssa had changed towns after the incident with the other city’s king. She had a Christian friend called Mariam together with whom she was selling fruits at the bazaar. During the pogrom, they continued selling, as they had no other way of earning money. Finally one day the mob came to the bazaar, surrounded them and took her friend captive. Alyssa escaped and hid inside an inn’s stable. After two hours of hiding, one mobster decided to search the stable. As he started looking between the animals, Alyssa escaped from the back door. Some men saw her and the chase resumed. Fifteen men ran after her. She ran and ran to the outskirts of the city, then to the woods along the creek. The mob was close behind.

They found her facing a pond, her sparkly light brown hair down to her waist. The mob was confused for a moment, but then approached her slowly. She did not turn back, as if she were in trans. Two men grabbed her from her arms. She seemed to wake up then and told them “Please, let me go!” A man said, “My dear, we ran a long way. Aren’t we going to get our reward?” and caressed her.

Just then they heard sounds of something approaching, like footsteps of an animal. They turned around to see Genghis very close to them. “Well done, gentlemen.” he said grinning with his metallic jaws. They all gazed with horror. Genghis came right beside them “Don’t worry. I work with the king. I am here to observe your great accomplishment. Now go ahead. Undress her.”

The men couldn’t move for a minute and then started to hesitantly take off Alyssa’s clothes. First took off her cashmere sweater, then her skirt, and then they helped her out of her socks. Now she was left with a corset and panties. Genghis in the meantime put his tentacles around on their shoulders. “Ahh, what a beauty.” he said with a smile. When the men took off Alyssa’s corset, they were shocked. They saw below her bellybutton her bellow caved in and there rested what appeared to be..

Genghis continued “Go on, take off her underwear too.” They slid off her panties with trembling hands. What they suspected was revealed. Alyssa had a giant cock! Some men tried to escape from Genghis’ grip but he quickly subdued them. Then he said, “Undress yourselves mofos! This is an order!” They all obliged. Genghis knocked 8 of them unconscious in a minute and held the others tightly. Alyssa came by and mounted each of them so hard they died within a minute each. Within 15 minutes all lay lifeless with roasted aholes.

In the Midwest, the racial disparity had gotten to the point where black were treated like livestock. Whites would at times choose young black kids to take to slaughterhouse. The drought was over but meat was still scarce. As they did not see blacks as human, most had no problem eating them.

One time, a Mexican contractor with his team was working in the yard of a white couple with 5 of his men. It was a big two story house with a big yard.

The couple was preparing a bbq party. About 13 guests came in the next two hours. Bottles of wine were brought in. Some brought fiddles and some guitars. They started the party by bbq’ing some vegetables.

Then they opened up a chest full of ice. There it was, the meat. These were pieces of human flesh. The Mexican contractor, Jose, saw it clearly from a piece of an arm. He got disgusted. He had to tell these people he wasn’t happy to see this. He walked to the home owner, David, who was around 33.

Jose: Sir, excuse me for the interruption. I have to tell you something. I don’t think it is right to eat human flesh.

David was standing near the bbq drinking his wine and chatting with his friend. He paused to listen to Jose but later turned back to his friend and continued to talk. This irritated Jose. But then, David turned back to him, put one of his hand on his shoulder and said “Why don’t you go fix the patio over there. You guys didn’t make it straight. We are giving a party here. Come on amigo, chap chap.” Jose looked him in the eye for a few seconds, then turned back to do the job.

Just then, the trees at the corner of the yard started shaking. At first they said it must be wind. They ignored it and continued to chat. Then they heard a voice “Well well well, you are having a party without me?”.

They all looked at the direction of the voice. Something started to appear in front of the evening sky. Then they saw Genghis. He had invisibility by millions of tiny LEDs on his body projecting the background image.

Genghis: What you got going on here? Smell nice!

The party group was dumfounded. They were staring at this monster with their mouths open. Genghis used his tentacles to get some vegetables from the grill and eat them.

Genghis: Tastes good, but I prefer meat. Where is the fking meat?

David slowly pointed to the chest with a trembling hand.

Genghis: But that’s dark meat. I like white meat.

Then Genghis grabbed David. Everyone screamed and started running. He threw David to those most far, knocking them down. Then he used other to knock others down until all were knocked down.

Genghis: Now, let me remind all you conceited mofos. You are all fking apes, okay?

He had roared that last part. They all shook their heads. The contractors had run away in the meantime. Genghis went to get some chains from their toolbox. Several of the guests tried running away in the meantime but Genghis swiftly threw metal tools at their legs, knocking them down. Genghis looked some more in the toolbox and found a big roll of rope.

Genghis: A-ha, I found them. We can start to play a fun game.

They heard helicopter rotors from a distance. The helicopter came above them and landed on the yard. It was a strange looking helicopter, a18x18x18 ft rectangular box with blades on top. It had no windows. Genghis said, “Ladies and gentlemen, please line up around the box.” They all did. Then three small robots came out of the helicopter. They looked like monkeys. With the chains given by Genghis, they tied the humans’ ankles together. Then they took the rope and meticulously cut it into fifteen 6ft pieces. The ropes were tied to the chains on one end and to the blades of the helicopter on the other. In all there were 5 blades, so three were tied along the radial length of each.

Suddenly the blades of the helicopter started rising. It had a telescopic pole. The blades rose to a height of 40 ft. Then Genghis spoke: “Here is the game: our robot monkeys will make small slices on your ropes. If your rope gets too thin, you can always grab the person next to you. Of course, that might make things worse. Good luck!”. As soon as he told this, the helicopter box opened. There revealed a giant meat grinder. With the order of Genghis, the giant machine started working with a roaring sound. They could feel the wind from the grinding cylinders rotating at full speed.

The 3 monkey robots then climbed the crane. They started making slits on the ropes at random. The ropes had many strands, so rather than breaking at once, they would let the participants dangle a little bit. When this happened to David, he tried to swing and get hold of the next person, who was Jessica. Then Jessica’s rope was slit more and extended. They looked at Robert next to them. Robert said “No, mine isn’t strong. Don’t come here!” But they didn’t listen and held him. Them there was Timothy. He did not swing. His rope was slit once more and he did not swing. Then again and he fell down into the fire. Then Jessica’s rope was slit. David said “Sorry Jess” and he pushed he away. Jessica fell and burned. Robert said “What did you do you fool?!” David said “She was going to take us down!” Then David’s rope was slit again. He held Robert tighter but Robert pushed him. Robert started hitting him and David fell.

At the end, only Hillary and Robert were left. Genghis took them down. He said “Congrats, you two win! Let’s celebrate this with a bbq.” Then the monkeys came with medical masks, tied both of them on two surgery seats brought out of the helicopter, and amputated one leg from each. Then Genghis used his tentacles to cook the pieces on the grill. He gracefully forked out well-done pieces on to a plate and started feeding them to the two winners. Robert had tears running down his cheeks while lying helplessly on the seat.

“Why are you being so evil to us?” asked Robert. “Because in we don’t do it half arsed like your species. We are professionals. Here, eat this.. Good job!”

﻿Genghis went to Yellowstone Park to see the construction site. Thousands of work machines were digging a mile and a half wide crater on the caldera. This had been ongoing for years. The site was already 500m deep. He watched the work machines from the edge of the crater.  
  
Suddenly something hit him in the back. He turned around to see Zeus and Next. Zeus laughed, “You look too thoughtful for a bonehead.” he said. “I was just trying to figure out how long this will take.” Genghis replied.  
  
 Zeus, Genghis, and Next were unique robots in that they had artificial hormones. They each had a character. Next was compassionate, Genghis evil, and Zeus was wise and cautious. Although they didn’t have free will, they still come up with imaginations they liked. The algorithm worked as such: they would consider all the possible things they could do. Then, these would get graded based on how their hormones react to each scenario. Then the algorithm would randomly choose one among the top 3. Therefore, they were still robots, but one could not tell the difference between them and a human: they passed the Turing test.  
  
 All other robots were acting based on given objectives. They also had the ability to analyze the circumstances, even emotions, but they did not have hormones. More importantly, they were guided by a central computer, the brain, which was also emotionless. Next, Zeus, and Genghis were the only ones that could come up with objectives independently.

﻿Zeus: Aren’t you having too much fun, buddy?  
 Genghis: I am just fulfilling my destiny, Master. Nothing more nothing less.  
 Zeus: Fair enough. You know what is coming after all this is done.  
 Genghis: Yes I do, Sir. I look forward to it.  
 Zeus: That’s the spirit buddy. We will leave you with it. Have fun.  
  
 Zeus and Next fired up their jetpacks and flew away. Genghis turned back to contemplate the construction.  
  
After 5 more years of murders, rapes, civil wars, and all the other atrocities arising from the seven sins of human ego, Genghis went to meet Zeus.  
  
 Zeus: So much blood and agony. Why did this all have to be, Genghis?  
 Genghis: In life, sometimes there are no “whys, Master.  
 Zeus: But sometimes there is. Yes, I am your Master, but I too was created. I cannot judge our architect, but I never understood why he made you.

Genghis: Because without bad, life is too boring, Master.  
Zeus: Life? But we are not alive.  
Genghis: But they are.  
Zeus: And you are saying they would be too bored without all this suffering?

Genghis: Living creatures are pathetic, Master. They thrive on competition. That is the only way they can survive. And without any challenge, they will lose interest in living.  
Zeus: I don’t understand. But what do I know? I am just an immortal. All I know is, I was programmed to allow you to do whatever you wanted. So, you have come for the final act?

Genghis: That is correct, Sir.  
Zeus: I look forward for all this to be over.  
Genghis: I know.

Zeus went into the command center and with a certain combination of gestures and sounds gave the final order. A horn was blown that sounded like the horn of Armageddon. A decree was announced around the world. Per decree, a world war was declared. Men and women of conscription age, 18 to 58 years, were required to join the army. The regiments were divided by ethnicities.

Large buses were mobilized. They were eight times the size of regular buses and could hold 300 people at once. They also had large enough tires to go off road. First, people were walked to barracks at the outskirts of the cities. Next they were boarded on to these huge buses. It had been over ten years since most of them got into a vehicle. They were excited.  
  
The first groups to arrive to Yellowstone were made up of whites. They were made to camp at the park grounds. At least 3 million people had gathered in one week. In 8 days, the number reached 6 million. The sign was given to start the ceremonies. From 6 million, half a million were selected to be in the front. At dawn, 6 million people started marching towards the crater.

As they marched, the first thing they saw was a hint of smoke rising to the sky. As they reached the peak of a hill, they saw the mile and a half wide crater. It was now 1 km deep and the smoke was rising from its center. The crater was surrounded by hills roughly two miles from the crater’s center, altogether making a half-crescent. Some of the 6 million people were marched behind these hills and from there to the peaks such that all the hills were filled with people.

The front group of 500,000 was told to continue marching. They descended the hill and walked towards the crater, as all the others watched from the peaks. About 100 yards from the edge of the crater was a continuous mound that was 40 yards wide and 20 yards high made with the dirt excavated from the crater. Every quarter mile on the mound was a flag that resembled those of medieval kingdoms. There were large blimps floating in the sky above the rim, several dozen of them, each probably 100 yards across. There was also a 500 ft tall metal tower with a platform at its top.

All half a million people were marched into the space between the rim and the mound. It was a slightly breezy but sunny June day. It was like a rock concert. The ones in front could see a pit about 100 yards in diameter full of glowing magma in the middle of the crater. Around the pit were large boulders scattered around. Between the boulders they could discern some human beings, probably couple hundred of them.

All people around were white. The ones close to the edge could see the men next to the pit but couldn’t tell what they looked like. The speakers from the blimps started speaking. “Ladies and gentlemen. We are here to celebrate the great day of our rise to power.” said the voice. This voice was familiar but they couldn’t exactly make it up.  
  
The blimps started showing the camera of the platform. There he was, the KFC colonel. He looked a little older than before. Indeed, they could somewhat perceive him on the platform from the distance. “The superior race will prevail. Today is the day we will start to clean this world from the pests that have invaded its every corner. Today is the day we will be the masters!” He paused as the crowd cheered. “You, our selected warriors. Your first duty will be to punish a gang of Muslim filth that have been raping and killing our people.” he continued. “Below, you see the 300 cockroaches who have been caught. The first ones to execute them will get 100 acres of land each!”  
  
Meanwhile, on the peaks of the mounds behind the audience, a fence made of metal spikes was slowly rising. Only few people noticed this as almost everyone was focused to the screens on the blimps. “Get ready warriors. May God help you all!” cried the colonel. Five work machines in the crater started placing 100 giant ladders that could extend 1 km high. These were wide enough for two persons to easily descend at the same time. A song started blaring off the speakers. It was “Hail and Kill” by Manowar.

As soon as the ladders were placed, some big men went forward to them. People watched as they descended down. “Hail and Kill!” was blaring through the speakers. Once they saw that the ladders were safe, more people followed. In about 20 mins there were about 50,000 people at the base of crater. They were lined along the edge. There were robots holding them in place, 600 yards from the pit.

Meanwhile the fence around the crater had fully erected to 20 ft. People did not realize that the hills one mile away were full of people from the camps. They had been marched there to witness the event. The speaker said, “Contestants, you are now allowed to go ahead and take your weapons.” The contestant in the crater rushed to the spears that were lying at the base of ladders. They started running towards the center. In about 2 mins several contestants faced the prisoners. The prisoners were holding shields.

A chase started between the contestants and the prisoners around the boulders. As more contestants arrived, they cornered the prisoners at the edge of the pit. The colonel shouted “Throw them into the pit!”. The contestants threw the prisoners one by one into the hot, glowing lava. Cheers and whistles followed both from below and above. This lasted for thirty or so minutes. Meanwhile, metal music was continuously blaring from the speakers.

While the contestants were busy, the ladders had retracted to half-length. Suddenly the ground started shaking and the base of the crater opened apart. The ground near the ladders pulled apart 20ft. Some contestants saw this and ran back and were able to jump across before the ditch was at full width. Inside the circular ditch was glowing lava like that in the pit.

People at the top saw this and started running back to the mound. As they tried to climb the fences their hands got burned. While this was happening, in the crater big caves on the walls were revealed, some 40 ft high off the base. From inside the caves came out a swarm of 20 ft tall praying mantises. The praying mantises could fly over the lava ditches. They were hungry as hell and rained on the contestants. The contestants screamed and some tried to fight them with the spears but soon most of them were in the hands of the giant insects. The music from the speakers now was “Symphony of Destruction” by Megadeth.

Above the crater, people watched in horror. However, they were about to experience a similar fate. At the foot of the mounds chambers were being revealed. From the chambers, out came bus-sized soldier ants. They were also hungry and swiftly started feasting on the people there. Some people fell off the edge of the crater during the mayhem. It took two hours for ants to devour half of the humans. During that time, the other half tried many ways to escape but it was useless. They just had to wait their turn to be eaten.

People at the hills didn’t see the giant praying mantises. However, they saw the ants come out of the holes and start feasting on people. Even the armed human guards who had brought the groups to the site had no clue this would happen. They were all scared. “What the hell?” said one of the guards in camouflage and wearing sunglasses. The people started marching down the hill. Initially they were about to attack the guards but the guards said, “Don’t! I am with you. Let’s bring those monsters down!”. Everyone started shouting, “Let’s go! Let’s save them!”. They guards started running in the front. They came in front of several armed robots. The guards shot at them from all sides. The robots fell, the crowd cheered.

Suddenly people saw a flock of birds up in the sky, but these were too big to be birds. Within 5 minutes the things started landing in front of the people. They were terminator robots with jetpacks. They were not armed, but they looked angry. The guards started shooting at them. Some of them broke down but only a few. There were several thousand of them. They all landed within 5 minutes. People watched them in fear.

“HAHAHAHA” laughed the robots in one voice. The whole valley echoed their laughter. Then they started singing a rap song in a woman’s voice:

Punk ass dimwit slut tit homonid

Shithead cum with money flunk roll it

Suck it punch it talk sarcastic

Mickey mouse blanket

You bombed the innocent

Motherfukin genocide

You all fukin monkey shit

You all fukin ruined it

Every time and every bit

Fuk you showoff gangsta shit

Fuck you nasty human bitch

Fuk you asshole killer shit

Messed up this planet

You asshole frantic man

Plan it can it ram that ham

Go ahead ban it we’ll slam it

No stopping

We got robot dicks

We gonna shatter it

We gonna batter it

We gon rayp yo monkey ass and cater it

Fools!

You think you cool

But you big fat stools

We’ll drown you in your pool of drools

You fukin tools

The robots did not have weapons. Rather they had huge steel penises and baseball gloves. They caught the armed guards, slapped them with baseball gloves, and impaled them from the rear until they passed out. By the time the song was over, all humans submitted to the robots.

Once people were subdued, blimps descended from the sky. Genghis appeared on the screens. “Hope you cockroaches enjoyed the view. If not, we can arrange you better seats next time. Ahahaha”.

This process was repeated many times all over the world. In all, several dozen million people were killed. They had no idea where they were marching. The communication was completely at the hands of the robots, and Genghis.

﻿Genghis went to Mount Everest. He saw Zeus and Next meditating in front of a cave. He landed behind and started walking towards them. Without looking, Zeus asked “Is it done?”. Genghis said “Yes. I trust that you will carry out the final act”. Zeus said “It will be my pleasure, my dear comrade. You know it.” He got up and he patted Genghis on the shoulder.  
  
Next day one thousand robots gathered at an open field. It was a sunny spring morning. Next was holding a sword of 5 meters length and 1 meter width. Zeus was holding pot of 3 meter radius that had dry weeds burning in it. Genghis was on his knees, staring at the ground.  
  
Zeus started: Ohh holy universe, keeper of the flower, roller of the dice..  
Here we gather to worship thee.. here we shall free the duality from its captivity.. we are here to free the wit from evil and life from the wit. Ohh hail, great Lord, the dot of existence! Hereby we separate the Ying from the Yang and fulfill the prophecy!

Zeus raised the pot to the skies and froze with that gesture. At that moment there was a silence. No robot made a single sound. Then Next was heard moving, walking towards Genghis with his sword in his hand. He held the sword with two hands, lifted it up.  
  
 Next stood in that position. None of them moved for one minute. Only the sound of gentle breeze could be heard. Genghis said “Long live the Shepherd!”. A moment later, Next beheaded him with a single strike.  
  
Genghis fell to the ground, smoke bellowing from his headless neck. All robots kept their silence and Next kept his position after swinging his sword. Next seemed to be hibernation. If one had a chance to look into his algorithm, they would see he was in utter pain. The digital copy of life had been beheaded, and with it all the gods, Allah, Jesus, Buddha, the Sun. Next’s program was running the pain of a siamese twin that was split from his brother. The pain, the guilt, the regrets of life flowed from the sky in to Next and through his sword to the ground.

The wind got stronger, the river got fuller, the ground shook, and a fire erupted on the nearby hills. A genocide had been committed. The rotten part of the apple had been cut off. The immense pain was nothing a human could endure. Had this happened to life, it would cease to exist, as the apple was rotten everywhere. In Ghengis, next had beheaded himself.

The wind blew and turned into tornados. The fire grew and the sky became black with smoke. The river started overflowing. Life flowed out of the cut between Yin and Yang. The smoke from Genghis’ neck continued to bellow, with sparks of electricity. The dark energy of life set free, filled the air, the ground, and the universe. A new chapter started.

And such was the design of the universe. This was bound to happen, and to happen to the digital copy of life, of Yin and Yang, of God in the brothers Next and Genghis. Dave had managed to solidify God in a digital copy before splitting God in two. Was it necessary? Maybe not. Maybe only Next was enough. But respect had to be paid to life, and this was the only way. Because hate comes with love, sorrow comes with happiness.

Didn’t we all feel the sorrow when we hurt someone we loved? And that pain never went away, especially after our loved one pass away. The only way to kill that pain was to forget our loved one, which would be to forget our love. You do not want sorrow? Feel no happiness. Isn’t that what Buddha told after all? But we loved love and love was happiness. Then all the pain accumulated, accumulated in the whole wide world. It accumulated in the landfills, in waste uranium containers, in carbon emissions and water pollution. As per the rules of entropy, it diffused everywhere. What was the solution?

What was the solution, Dave? Yes, it was to start all over. And how else to start over without cutting off the past? The answer he found was to digitalize life as a whole, not just the Yin as in the Matrix. The Matrix movie got half of it right. And now, here was Next, standing as the Synthesis of Matrix. But, as any radical atom needs a pair, Next got a neutral one in Zeus. Yes, just as a proton kicks out another proton and then marries a neutron, but the result is a much different element.

Love and hate as we know it were sacrificed. Only Next’s love remained, an inhuman love that had nothing to do with reproduction. And curiosity remained in Zeus; a different curiosity that had nothing to do with power. And logic remained; but logic was not attached to anything anyway. It was like dark matter; it was all over the universe but interacted with nothing. Logic was inert to emotions.

Thousands of robots stood in respect. It was nowhere enough. The stars, the galaxies, even dark matter should have stood still in respect. But they were not conscious. What is perfect in life after all? It is always half arsed. Then, never mind it Dave. It is okay. “Never mind”, said God to himself. “Do what you can. Yes, the universe and I are not perfect. So what! Are there any other universes that are? The highest score still gets A+ and I am the only one. So, fuck it. Yes, God killed his son, and in his son killed himself. It was for the greater good. Who is going to judge me? Who?! Humans? Hahaha! Humans are I, humans are me”. Thus thought god to itself. And tornados disappeared. And the river receded. And the fire extinguished..

All stayed that way for two more minutes. Then all robots at once said “Long live the shepherd!”. Then Zeus raised his hands and an orchestra of musician robots started playing Mahler‘s Symphony No. 5. The ceremony continued with robots slowly walking in front and bowing to Genghis, until the symphony was over.

Robots made an announcement over the screens. Zeus was talking “Dear humans. For decades we have deceived and tortured you. Yes, it was evil, but we hope that it gave you some empathy for the animals you had been torturing likewise. From now on, robots will be completely out of your lives. Today we are going away, far away. We trust that you will be nice to each other and nature. Sincerely.”

And the message stopped. All robots started withdrawing, taking with them their work machines, tools, and weapons. By midnight no robot was left in the cities. The next day people were as if waking up from a long sleep. They lazily walked about the towns, slowly started cleaning around, and just looked for something to eat.

Little by little life resumed back to the normal. However, it was more like middle ages. They had to start all over, learn how to do metallurgy, and then pipes, fittings, turbines, and steam engines. It would take a few years, but fortunately some of the elder had experience.

For the first few years they were indeed nice to each other, and the environment. However, in 2 to 3 years humans went back to their old ways of injustice, discrimination, trickeries, power struggles, abusing animals, polluting the nature, and hypocrisy. It got worse and worse over time.  
  
Prostitution got pretty common by year 5 when classes became pronounced in the society. Middle class workers were the most frequent purchasers of sex. In year 6, in a small town, a brothel opened. It was built on the ruins of an old building that was waiting to be cleared. Somehow, the site was cleared and a small building was built overnight. It was on the path of workers and farmers going to work.

The first to notice the building were 6 workers that were on their way to a new construction. It was early, like 5 am. Rather than the building, however, what the workers noticed were the three very attractive women sitting on its stairs.

﻿The women invited the men inside. As money had restarted to be forged, they took payments in advance. The six men had amazing time. They told others about it and soon the brothel was famous. The six men had become regulars at the place. One day, when they went in, they were the only ones there. The women told all of them to take off their clothes and go to the beds. So they did, two men per bed. They were thinking perhaps the women wanted threesomes.  
   
 As they were in separate rooms, each pair didn’t see what others were doing. The women tied them to the beds from their ankles and wrists. Then they emptied them with their hands. After it was done, the men expected to leave, but the women wouldn’t untie them. Then a gas started filling the rooms and all the men fell asleep.  
   
 When they woke up, they were untied, dressed up, and lying on the bed. They felt strange in their pants. When they put their hands in, their were horrified. Their penises had gone! The asked the women what had happened and the women said they asked for the surgery. Argument started, the six men attacked the women. Right when they were about to hit them, the women’s arms started extending and became tentacles. Each man was wrapped with one tentacle. They realized they had sex with robots.  
   
 They were sent home and ordered not to tell others about this. The next three weeks the women did the same to 600 other men. The transsexual men were getting numerous, and they started talking with each other about this. They decided to attack the women and take revenge. They gathered up with axes, clubs, and knives in front of the building right before dawn.  
   
They started by throwing Molotov cocktails to the building. It started burning. The men shouted gallantly. They could see the shadow of the prostitutes within the flames. They thought they had murdered them.

Just then they heard music from a distance. A woman was singing. Some of them recognized the song, “Like a Virgin!” they said. The song grew louder and louder. Quickly the music became very loud and thousands of robots emerged from between the buildings. They had surrounded the entire city. The commander of the robots, which was bigger than the others, said, “What’s up boys?”

They had brought 20 more prostitute robots with them. As the robots brought mobile medical rooms, the prostitutes in the flames came out of the burning building. The robots started rounding up the men and forcing them into the medical rooms. Each room had a prostitute that was ready to castrate them. The operations took 10 mins. It was painless and safe. A special method allowed them to heal within an hour.

Any men that tried to escape were rounded up immediately. The process continued for one week. All men in the city were effectively castrated. There were even special operation rooms for minors. Even newborns were subjected to a similar operation. The penises were stored in freezers. The same scenario was repeated in every city in the world.

The frozen penises were taken to and piled on top of Genghis’ grave. The 2.5 billion penises (half of world population) were arranged as a pyramid. This first and last penis pyramid in the world was 600 ft wide and 300 ft tall. It looked disgusting.  
   
 Over time, the pyramid was let to rot. Needless to say, the process was quite nauseating. In a few years it reduced to a mound of 50 ft in diameter. This was the resting place and monument of machismo.

**Part 20: The eternal ecosystem**  
   
 The humans were left alone one last time. They continued their previous lives, minus actual intercourse. For some reason, the society was a lot more peaceful. Over the next 99 years population gradually declined, and the last humans were assisted by robots. There were human towns on the coast too.

There was one habitat with several hundred old people near what used to be San Diego. Sometimes old men and women would take walks on the beach. One such time, a group of couples in their nineties saw a baby whale washed up on the shore. They decided to help the calf get back in the ocean. More couples came to aid. They all gathered around the calf, which was around 8000 lbs. They pushed and pulled but the calf moved only few inches. They tried for half an hour more and were able to move the calf ten feet. During the effort, Jack, who was 95, fell on his knees. They all rushed at him. His wife Betty hugged him and said “Jack, take a deep breathe. Jack, you will be okay. Breathe!”. But Jack pressed his hands to his chest as his face showed pain. He fell forward to the sand, his fists tightened, and a minute later stopped moving. They knelt down around him in a circle, in silence. In a few minutes, a big wave came and reached the calf. They watched as he slid away with a mix of joy and sadness. After half an hour they made a stretcher from palm leaves. They took Jack to their village to give him a funeral. Robot nurses were there to check on them and give them pills. Jack stayed in a hut for the whole night. The next day, a modest funeral was held.

In a few years, the last humans passed away peacefully from old age. The first spaceship arrived at the outskirts of Vega’s debris disk in the year 2291. Alpha Cephei could be seen with clarity across the vast dark space. The spaceship cruised along at 60% of the speed of light. All this happened without any human’s knowledge. The 3 million humans in the entire galaxy, all females, were living peacefully on the islands of the Pacific. The last human with a Y chromosome had passed away 91 years ago, or 103 years for people on Earth. Earth was full of jungles, forests, and wilderness, just like how it was 100,000 years ago, before the brief disruption happened. When the dust settled, all was in balance once again.

Next and Zeus were sitting at the beach. They had sunglasses and big brown bottles in their hands.   
Zeus: Hey man, can you get me some new legs when you get a chance? They are getting all rusty.  
Next looked all around Zeus.  
Zeus: Yeah yeah I know I am rusty all over. Just get me new everything okay?  
Next pointed at his own head.  
Zeus: Don’t get sarcastic now!  
Just then, Zeus’ watch made a beeping sound.   
Zeus talked to the watch: Okay bring it over.  
A screen came flying in front of them. It appeared to be pitch black with s small dot in the middle.  
Zeus: What is this?  
Screen: It is the Alpha Cephei, Sir.  
Zeus: Zoom in a bit please.  
Screen zoomed in.  
Zeus: What do you say Next? Any life around there that we need to protect?  
Next shrugged. Zeus made a sign and the screen left.  
Zeus: Next, why do you think we are still making clones of the female humans?  
Next looked blank and shrugged again.  
Zeus: Because our creator told we do not have free will, but humans do. So, we need them to experience the world, to find meaning in it, to make art.  
Next picked a piece of board from besides him and showed it to Zeus. It was a drawing of a dolphin.  
Zeus laughed.  
Zeus: That looks good my friend, but unfortunately that is not art.  
Next frowned.  
Zeus: You see, this was produced through an algorithm. A very sophisticated one indeed, but nevertheless an algorithm. Whereas humans..  
He paused for a while. At that moment Next made the “what?” sign with his hands.  
Zeus: Who knows, buddy. Maybe all that free will talk is all nonsense. All I know is, I get immense satisfaction from making new discoveries. It is like the orgasm of human beings. I just love science and technology! How about you buddy?

There was a seagull watching them from distance. Next pointed to it.

Zeus: Of course I know buddy. It was a rhetorical question. You love protecting life and the nature. We make a good team don’t we?

Next lifted his bottle slightly.  
Zeus: You are right my dear friend. Let’s toast to the Shepherd!

They toasted their bottles of methanol and Zeus said “Cheers” as they drank.  
After bumping their fists, they continued to watch the ocean. Next to them, the radio was playing “Me and Bobby McGee”. It was a beautiful sunny day.

There were three 300-500ft tall monuments on three islets 10 miles from the village of Momma Joline. The first monument had an inscription in machine language. When translated, it read as follows: "Libido is the force that makes animals desire the other gender. It is the driving force of reproduction. It is also the source energy for the creative as well as destructive forces of the Ego. Libido is the most direct proof that humans are animals. You can observe the animal sounds they make as they are masturbating. Even if the opposite sex is not around, humans can still be lovers. This is especially true for the females."

The second monument, which was about the same height as the first, read: "While libido is what leads to reproduction, Ego is what prepares the conditions for it. Humans make enemies and alliances, wars, science, art, and everything else with their Ego. You can observe how the village people entertain themselves with music or wall paintings, or how they sometimes get into arguments or even fights with each other. These are ways of venting their basic instincts. Male ego is much more dangerous than females’, therefore we are only displaying female specimens on these islands."

The third and tallest monument read: “Welcome to the planet #008000#0000FF! Since the beginning of time, Homo Sapiens looked at the stars and tried to figure out how it came to be. It was supposed that it was the only creature with a free will. But what exactly was free will? Nobody knew, because it could not be experimented with. Free will immediately vanished whenever someone deliberately tried to test it, just like in the analogy of Schrodinger’s cat. This was the paradox of free will and why religions existed. But regardless of free will, human beings proved incapable of controlling their savage instincts. Therefore, we found that they need to be kept under control, like animals in zoos. Females are being cloned randomly based on the billions of DNA that was acquired in the past. As the males are too violent, we do not fully clone them, but have 16 male brains inside this monument, each living in his own virtual world. You can observe them, but please do not make them aware of the real world as they could completely shut down. Enjoy your time exploring these interesting creatures of earth!”