**LIMITATIONS**

* 3000 words. It’s a *short* story.
* Mild swearing may be acceptable. Sex should not be depicted.

**What happens to Aiden to make him choose disenfranchisement?**

**WAIT – what’s the point of the story?**

* Social management of increasingly scarce resources
  + Health data on a detailed level and networked, HIX on steroids
    - Data getting cheaper all the time… need quantum computers? Or NANOBOTS!
    - Serial violations of privacy in “the social interest”
    - Individualism redefined as illness
    - “Hey I know that guy”… knowing of a dire consequence of non-compliance and being unable to share
    - What if J Edgar Hoover were the HHS secretary?
* Moral dilemma created by advanced technology
  + What kind of dilemma?
    - Long life – haves vs have nots
    - Super abilities from a drug
    - All these places are herded into a specific part of town by regulations (like strip clubs today)… “SOME NAME district”, analogous to “red light district”.

**Who are the characters in this story?**

* Aidan Daniel Markson, aged 28
  + What is he doing?
    - Computer science/programming major? – NO, everyone can program
    - Data scientist for a federal government contractor, think CGI
  + What problem is he going to have?
    - In an economy driven mostly by contract work rather than regular employment, with chronic underemployment a problem, having regular work is a higher-stakes game
    - Health costs drive the bottom line as much or more than the actual business does
    - Contributing negatively could land someone in political trouble at work
  + What if any solution to this problem will arise?

**OUTLINE OF STORY**

* Starts with EMP scene?
* Background of nano-machines and HIX
  + Monitors health data in real time, sends wirelessly to HIX
  + HIX hooked to health care payment mechanism
  + Each person has “shared social responsibility” to meet certain biometric screening targets, otherwise subsidies are cut – “premium surcharges”
  + “Difficult” persons are diagnosed with whatever from DSM-VII and locked up.
* How does Aiden get involved?
  + Hit with surcharge for eating too much sodium at noodle shop over time

**Who is Aiden?**

* Aiden is 28
* Studied data science
* Lives in a huge city (does it matter which one?) in a small apartment

**What kind of world does he live in?** (are all these details relevant?)

* Population of US = 500M, population of World = 10B.
* Manufacturing has cratered, housing shortage
* Haven’t yet invented the technologies needed to keep up with dreams…
  + Hybrid cars – where cars are permitted – are more prevalent (and more expensive)
  + Gas cars are not permitted in even “medium-sized” large cities
  + Small boom / bust / long stagnation economic cycles
  + In major cities you need a license to own a car (like Singapore)
  + In major cities new dwellings are limited to 600 sq ft + 150 per family member (limit 3).
  + Severe depopulation of rural areas like KS, NE… old towns mowed over for agriculture (feed 2/3 more people than now, and 4bn more worldwide)
* “Public health” is heavily managed by the government – the entire healthcare system has essentially been nationalized
* A network of nanobots

**Why does he want the EMP?**