THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

Nothing is impossible, the word itself says I'm possible."
Audrey Hepburn

"Limitless undying love which shines around me like a million suns it calls me on and on across the universe."
John Lennon

SiBoRE® **- Si**mple **Bo**oks **R**eaders **E**dit

Words marked with an underline and footnote in this book indicate a link to further information. By using these links, you may read and/or improve on this external information. Because this external information is dynamic and can be changed by the reader, this makes every reader of this book a potential dynamic editor!

DYNAMIC EDITORS

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How to Use Links and QR Codes

Links in the story will have a footnote and be underlined. In eBooks, external information can be seen by clicking on the link. In printed books, the links will take you to a page that allows for various ways to see external information about the story. To use a QR code link, you must have a device with a camera that can connect to the Internet. Most cell phone cameras have this feature. Test your QR code reader by scanning the code shown here. “OK Code Reader Working” should appear on your screen

Author's Notes

In the book, *The Ultimate Weapon,* you will find references to events in history and facts about nature and science. This information has been selected by the author but is not permanent. *The Ultimate Weapon* is actually the sequel to the book *The Path to Xanadu* and takes you beyond the limits set in the previous SiBoRE® series. Each chapter ends with a link to allow the reader to make comments, change links in that chapter, or add a section to the chapter.

Earth Won, the first book in this collection, describes the hardships the Earth went through due to greed and lies. Thank goodness there were brave people (and robots and pets!) to stand up against the evils of humanity. Seymour, his robot assistant Robyn, and his dog Glen work out of a secret laboratory and answer the mysterious calls of nature whenever their help is needed. Seymour meets Ruby on one of his adventures and the melding of soul mates begins. Doctor Paul and Ester rekindle a long-lost romance with the help of other GA (Group Alpha) robots. Can you imagine a double marriage in a palace inside a mountain? This book is the beginning of the Blox family and the foundation for the E-Blox series.

The Great Awakening is a sequel to *Earth Won.* It takes place ten years after Seymour and Ruby get married. They lived in the palace inside the large cave on top of a mountain. A terrible pandemic that could put the whole world to sleep forces the cave to go into lockdown. There were four robots named Robyn, Max, Min, and Feeniks who helped save the world from this coma pandemic. Devyn, a very old cat from *Earth*

Won, is taken into the light by a moth that is really the spirit of Glen—the hero of the book *Earth Won*. An albino crow helps lead everyone in the right direction. A grandmother named Yolanda and a boy named Martin showed others that only love could save the world. The poems in this story were necessary to help the characters unlock mysteries and encourage goodness. There is a link in this book that allows you to hear the characters sing a song that brings love back to many cold hearts. The book ends with many questions that are answered in the next book in the series.

The *Path to Xanadu* takes place later and answers questions left open in *The Great Awakening*. This book lets us visit Socrates, Plato, and Leonardo DaVinci in the past. It also takes readers back to the Great Hall in the future. I recommend reading these earlier books to get to know and recognize many of the characters in this next story.

The events in *The Ultimate Weapon* move rapidly and the readers may want more detail, so each chapter has a link for the reader to add or change that section of the book.

Art Seymour

Chapter 1
SILENCE

The world was still the same, but the Blox family had been transformed. After traveling deep inside the Earth to visit the Great Hall, everything was different. They started to see things that never bothered them before—but now they were concerned. Science was being used to make life more of a shadow than a reality. The news was more of a fabrication than a real documentation of facts. Advertisements were promoting illusions to make people follow a contrived path to a poor replacement for true happiness. Sadness had been classified as a disease and was treated with drugs that numbed the brain. People were following the **pied piper**[1] in a trance with eyes blind to the true path to joy and peace. Free will was being coerced to follow the Creature and worship him. Robots did not have free will and were not capable of understanding this attack on humanity. But the people in the Great Hall had been watching for years, and now the Blox family and their friends were given the task to open the eyes of the world.

After returning to the castle, Seymour found sleep out of his reach. It was after midnight and he was sitting at the table in the kitchen sipping tea when Ruby, dressed in her pajamas and bathrobe, entered the room. She made herself a cup of tea and sat down next to her husband.

"The twins fell asleep in front of their computer," she whispered after taking a careful sip of tea. Then she added, "I managed to get them into bed but they wanted to go back to whatever they are working on."

Seymour smiled knowing her biggest concern

was always for the children. He turned to face Ruby and with a sad face mumbled, “We were given an impossible mission. I don’t think we can do it.”

“What!” Ruby exclaimed. “Where is my husband? You look like the man I married. You resemble the man that helped save the world from a pandemic and eliminated the great lockdown. Except for that sad look on your face, I would think you were he. What happened? Did someone steal your happy pills?”

Seymour’s expression did not change. He looked down into his teacup and muttered, “I guess so.”

In a calm voice and a clever smile Ruby concluded with, “Well, whoever took them, I hope they’re happy.”

Seymour first chuckled and then looked at his wife’s huge grin and after another small giggle said, “You sure do know how to soften a disastrous situation. How did you get so smart?”

She never answered his question but replied, “Let’s finish our tea and head back to the bedroom. We have a big day tomorrow and we will need some sleep.”

Despair quickly returned and Seymour sadly mumbled as he turned his eyes back to his cup of tea, “We cannot change the world. The Creature and his followers have obscured everything we did in the past. People cannot see past the poison fruit being offered. What could I ever do to change the minds of these misguided people? Free will has been turned into momentary satisfaction and feared regulation. I have no answer for fighting these evil forces.”

Ruby had never seen this look of anguish on her husband’s face before. She had never felt the deep despair in his words before. Not knowing what to do she slowly rose from her chair and went to the counter

to rinse her teacup and place it on a towel lying on the counter by the sink. Silently she left the kitchen and walked down the hall to the balcony with the two-seat glider and sat thinking in the dark. After a long soft cry she whispered, “I need your help. If anyone can hear me, please tell me what to do.” She was surprised and quickly sat up when a man’s voice declared, “What seems to be your problem? Perhaps I can help.”

In a dark corner of the balcony, unnoticed by Ruby when she entered, stood Jason the group beta or Betazoid **android**[2]. He was highly skilled in all things medical and had returned with the family from the Great Hall to help in their mission. When he approached Ruby, the smile on his face, the blue shirt he was wearing, and his artificial skin made him look more human than robotic. Jason knew that looking down at someone when talking was very intimidating, so he sat on the floor in front of Ruby, took her hand and looking up asked, “What is the problem?”

Ruby found his gentle approach and the warmth of his hand soothing. She replied, “It’s Seymour. He seems to be in a deep state of depression and I don’t know what to do.”

“Has he ever been like this before?” Jason asked.

“No, never,” Ruby answered. “And he has never refused to go to bed with me before.”

“It is probably not **clinical or major depression**[3]. I will take a look at him and run some tests. He will not be aware that I am scanning him so it will not add to his condition. You need to try and get some sleep and we can discuss this further in the morning,” Jason added.

Ruby did not think she could sleep, but Jason’s gentle voice and warm touch compelled her to at least try. They both went back to the kitchen and found

Seymour asleep with his head lying on one arm on the table. Ruby took his empty teacup to the sink, rinsed it out, and put it next to her cup on the towel while Jason carefully got Seymour to his feet. In a daze, Seymour mumbled, “What’s up?”

Ruby replied, “It’s time for bed.” She took his hand and helped him shuffle his way to the bedroom where he mechanically took off his outer garments, shoes, and socks then plopped on the bed and pillow.

During the journey to the bedroom, Jason performed all known **medical scans**[4] on Seymour’s brain and found no irregularities. His programming led him to wait to see if sleep might make things better. When Ruby placed her bathrobe on the chair next to her side of the bed he commented, “After a good night’s sleep things may be better. I will see you in the morning,” and proceeded to leave the room.

During his exit, Ruby replied, “Thank you Jason. Good night.”

The next few days were difficult for Ruby. Seymour responded to simple questions but refused to say anything about the mission. Robyn told Ruby that he has not communicated telepathically with any of the androids since returning from the Great Hall. Jason ran every test and concluded that Seymour was using his free will to go silent when conversations were about the mission. Because all of the androids were programmed to respond to questions and did not have free will to refuse, this was a problem they could not understand or fix. Ruby’s ability to experience empathy let her feel his struggle but offered no solution to the problem.

Before the return from the Great Hall, the Creature had concluded that Seymour was one of the main reasons past plans to control everyone had not succeeded. The Creature knew that failure was a bitter

pill to swallow. Therefore, this master of demons sent many to whisper in Seymour's ear that changing the world was impossible. Constant whispers of failure to change the world made the evil ones able to convince Seymour the best action to take was to remain silent. Even Ruby's great love could not block these whispers of disaster.

Paul and Ester waited two days for Seymour to get everyone organized, but heard nothing. On the third day, they asked Robyn to set up a meeting to discuss the plan for waking up the world. On the day after Paul's request, they all gathered in the large chamber of the palace at the time Robyn had set. After everyone was seated, Robyn explained, "The purpose of this assembly is to clearly define the undertaking we all agreed to and the role each will play to accomplish this task. Paul would like to propose a simple statement to define our mission." Everyone turned to look at Paul when Robyn stopped talking.

Paul glanced at his notebook, looked up, and stated, "I propose we call this project 'Wakeup World.' No one liked the name and there were many negative comments.

Andy laughingly said, "It sounds like an alarm clock," and others followed with similar statements.

Paul requested, "Then what do you suggest we call our project?"

Many hours of discussion finally ended with a majority agreeing on 'Illuminating Truth' as the name for the mission. During the debate, Ruby would ask Seymour to help but he would just shrug his shoulders and look down at his hands on the table. He kept hearing whispers of how his words could lead them in the wrong direction and failure would be his fault. He chose silence as the best action he could take.

Paul ended the meeting by setting up the next gathering in two days. He asked everyone to bring their plans on how they would proceed to 'Illuminate Truth,' and what they might need from others in the group. Then turning toward Seymour he asked, "Would you like to add anything?"

Seymour said nothing, but shook his head to respond with no.

Paul added, "How about a closing prayer?"

Seymour shocked everyone by answering with the same non-verbal response of no, rising, and leaving the room. For the next two weeks the group held many meetings, but Seymour did not attend any of them. Nobody could figure out what had made him go into this shell of silence. Even the people in the Great Hall were mystified and could not offer a cure.

The Creature was pleased at the success his demons had on shutting Seymour down. He sent even more of his evil spirits to intensify the attack and told them they would turn him and make him choose to follow them. There was one thing, however, the master of the demons missed. That was the unconditional love Ruby had for her husband. Ruby felt his anguish and suffered with him, but never left his side. In those horrible weeks, she observed one thing. She noticed that music and some harmonious sounds gave Seymour a small amount of relief. These sounds could momentarily block the whispers from the demons and Seymour felt less troubled. Because Ruby was very **empathetic**[5] she could feel even these insignificant moments of relief.

One morning, Ruby turned to Robyn and said, "Seymour is sitting on the balcony and I want you to go there with me. I am going to ask him if there is any song or sound he would like to hear. He may not

comment, but if he does, I want you to play that song or make that sound."

Robyn followed Ruby to the balcony as instructed. Ruby sat on the glider next to Seymour and said, "It is awfully quiet out here. Is there any song or sound you would like to hear?"

All the evil spirits around Seymour whispered, "Tell her no. Tell her you want silence."

Seymour followed the orders and replied, "All I want to hear is the sound of silence."

Robyn heard his request, searched her extensive memory banks, and played the song called *The Sound of Silence*.

{Use QR code to listen with Seymour.}

Perhaps it was the harmony of the voices and the chords in the melody of the song, but no matter how hard they tried, the whispers of "Don't listen" were obscured. Seymour could not only hear the words, but he also could understand their significance. When the melody, ended a glut of murmurs returned.

"Pay no attention to that bizarre song!"

"Nonsense, that was all nonsense!"

"That song will lead you to failure!"

Seymour quickly stood up and shouted, "Leave me, you demons! I command you to be gone from this place and never return! Take your words with you! I ask the virtuous life-forces to chase these frauds from this place, please." And the whispers stopped. In that moment of silence he felt someone grab his hand. Looking down he saw Ruby's face, tears running down from her bright eyes, and a smile of joy. She softly commented, "Welcome back."

Seymour felt like a man who had been locked in

a solitary confinement prison for a long time and just got released. The key to his cell was the song. He also knew he had power over his enemy's guards and made them leave. But the most important thing was he felt the unconditional love from Ruby. Taking both of her hands, he pulled her from the glider, put both arms around her, and hugged her. His cheek was on hers and he could feel the cold tears of joy running down her face. His eyes were closed and his mouth was close to her ear as he softly said, "Forgive me. I am so sorry for leaving you. I was weak." As they both sat on the glider still holding each other close Ruby replied, "You are back. That is all that matters."

Robyn interrupted the reunion by asking, "Would you like some tea?"

Seymour sat up and turned to face Robyn and said, "Where did you get that song? Who told you to play it?"

With robotic obedience Robyn answered, "The song was in my memory bank. It is over five centuries old. Ruby told me to play anything you wanted to hear. You told me you wanted to hear *The Sound of Silence* so I played it."

Seymour added, "Would you play it again and put the words on a display so we can stop and discuss after each stanza?" Instantly a large holographic display appeared with the words being highlighted as the song played.

Hello darkness, my old friend
I've come to talk with you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of silence

Robyn paused the song when the first stanza

ended. Seymour looked at Ruby, with an excited expression and quickly said, “Do you remember in the Great Hall’s meta-world how it was dark and Grace told us that in our darkest moments we can sometimes see more clearly? The dark can truly be our old friend as the song says. Then her father came and planted that vision in our brains. Exactly like the song says!” Ruby had never seen her husband this excited before. Her shocked expression made him continue with, “Wait! Wait! There is even more! Robyn, play the next verse.” Robyn followed his command and displayed the next verse as it played.

In restless dreams, I walked alone
Narrow streets of cobblestone
‘Neath the halo of a street lamp
I turned my collar to the cold and damp
When my eyes were stabbed by the flash of a neon light
That split the night
And touched the sound of silence

Robyn, following orders, paused at the end of the second verse. With the same excited enthusiasm Seymour remarked, “These singers who lived centuries ago were in the same dream state, walking narrow cold damp streets alone. Then a bright light split the night and freed them. Just like this song freed me.” Staring at Ruby’s dazed face, he shook her hands, turned back towards Robyn and remarked, “Resume.” Robyn played the next part of the song.

And in the naked light, I saw
Ten thousand people, maybe more
People talking without speaking
People hearing without listening
People writing songs that voices never shared
And no one dared
Disturb the sound of silence

Seymour instantly offered his analysis of this section but with a less excited voice he said, “Even

centuries ago the people were entranced into silence. They were afraid to speak out or to listen to anyone who showed them a different path. Even way back in their time the whispers of the evil ones kept them disconnected and silent. Everyone chose to be silent." Ruby's smile and understanding expression helped Seymour relax for a moment. Ruby finally asked, "Should we continue?" and Seymour replied, "Yes, please." Without being told, Robyn played and revealed the next part of the song.

"Fools" said I, "You do not know
Silence like a cancer grows
Hear my words that I might teach you
Take my arms that I might reach you"
But my words, like silent raindrops fell
And echoed in the wells of silence

Seymour calmly offered his analysis of this section by saying, "The composer of this song tried to show the people of his time how silence is like a disease that grows in you. He hoped his words could help them understand, but it seems his words fell like silent rain and did nothing. I believe this was an expression of **depression**[6] at his failure. I understand failure and it was one of the reasons I wanted to hide in a well of silence." A moment of sadness followed and then Seymour said, "Robyn, continue." The final verse was played.

And the people bowed and prayed
To the neon god they made
And the sign flashed out its warning
In the words that it was forming
Then the sign said, "The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls
In tenement halls"
*And whispered in the sound of silence. **

Seymour's voice was strong now and he sounded like the man Ruby married as he gave his final

analysis of the song. “We have also made a god out of technology. The words of the prophet were given to us in the Great Hall and we all promised to help people get back on the right path. The master of the evil ones found my weakness was fear of failure and he sent soldiers out to persuade me to choose silence to avoid misleading our family. I now know that fear is one of the Creatures strongest weapons, but I also learned that we could choose to be strong and drive away the demons by just commanding them to leave. Free will is a great weapon, but we must desire to find the right path to help each other. We must use unconditional love even for those that hate us. We must choose Agape!”

Ruby pulled her husband up as she stood and said, “Well your vacation is over. It is time we get to work on that promise we made.”

Seymour had one more question for Robyn and asked, “Who wrote that song and what were the words written on the walls?” Robyn’s eyes flashed a deep purple as memory banks were searched and replied, *The Sound of Silence*[7] song was written by Paul Simon, sung by Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, and the words on the walls found in an interview were, ‘The end is near’ and ‘Repent.’”

Edit Chapter 1[8]

DEMONS WHISPERING

*Words to song have copy write: © Paul Simon Music, Sony/atv Songs Llc

Chapter 2
IT

It was early afternoon when Seymour and Ruby left the balcony. Robyn followed and asked, “Do you want me to make you both a lunch?”

Seymour replied, “I am too excited to eat! I need to catch up on all the meetings I missed! I need to find out what is going on!”

Ruby squeezed his hand and ordered, “You need to calm down. A little lunch with some hot chocolate may help. I will fill you in while we eat.” Robyn led them into the kitchen and started processing some buttered biscuits and hot chocolate. Seymour sat next to Ruby and held her hand as she lovingly started her summary of the last two weeks.

“Do you remember the meeting you were at when we decided on the main goal and name of our undertaking?”

Seymour replied, “Vaguely. It was about truth and clarification I think.”

“Actually, the mission that was agreed upon by everyone was to illuminate truth and ‘IT’ was the name we gave our project.” Ruby continued, “In the early meetings that followed we discussed how to organize the group, pick a director to run the meetings, and a secretary to record the minutes of every meeting. Paul was elected as the director and Ester, his wife, as the secretary. I made all of these meetings through a video link with Robyn who attended and made recordings of each meeting that you can watch to catch up if you want.”

Seymour interrupted, “Why weren’t you there?”

Ruby smiled and with sparkling green eyes

sighed, “I could never leave your side. You were suffering and in such torment. I did not know what to do, but I knew you needed me with you, so I stayed close. I always stayed close and held your hand when you would let me.”

With a deep look of remorse and eyes full of tears he asked, “There were times when I would not let you hold my hand?”

Ruby could always feel his pain and this time was not different as she felt the shaft of shame that pierced his heart. He was still holding her hand so she placed her other hand on top of his, stared into his weeping eyes and declared, “It was not you that denied me. They were controlling your actions. It was them not you! I have never doubted your love for me, so don’t you believe that you hurt me. That sounds like something they would want you to think. Tell them again to be gone!” Her words fell like soft snow on a burning heart. He could truly feel the pain of remorse expire and the love for his wife replace it.

Robyn’s timing was impeccable as she placed a plate of biscuits and fruit on the table in front of them and mechanically announced, “Eat. I will show you all the recordings of the meetings when you are ready,” and went back to the sink to clean up the area.

Seymour looked at Ruby and smiled as they both said simultaneously, “Always one step ahead!” It was true that the GA androids had metatronic brains, but they still could not predict the future. They all were in constant contact with the folks at the Great Hall and often received messages of what might be necessary in the near future. Because of this, the Group Alpha androids did indeed seem to be “one step ahead.”

After lunch they followed Robyn to a small office in the palace that was rarely used and sat on a

couch, still holding hands. The many years of marriage did not diminish the joy of touching your soul mate. After two weeks of emotional separation, neither one wanted to let go. Robyn used the technology of making the room into a holodeck and placing the couple into the recording of the meeting. It felt real as it started with Paul sitting at the head of a circular table and opening the meeting.

"In our last session we agreed our job was to illuminate truth. We then agreed to call this project 'IT.' I asked everyone to spend the next couple days to decide on how they will bring their talent to help IT. I will start with what I feel I can do to illuminate truth in the world." He paused to take a sip of water then continued, "I will be working with Jason and Ester to build the factory on Jarvis Island that will make more Betazoid androids like Jason. They will be no-fee-doctors for the people, and they will require no masks over their mouths because they are not capable of contracting or spreading any disease. They will be funded by us and available twenty-four hours a day to anyone who needs help. These doctors will determine when people can remove their facemask or give those who can't a new transparent mask that allows smiles to be seen. I believe that smiles are the seeds to agape and hope this will bring the people back to their true path to Xanadu."

Ester spoke next and added, "After the coma war, we took many infected soldiers from the evil army and tried to cure them on the island. Some responded quickly and went back to their homes with a desire to spread love. Many took longer but eventually left with love in their hearts and a conviction to treat others as friends. A few, however, spent years in the center and left with a desire to get back power and wealth and

control others. Last year the facility was empty and no longer needed, so we closed the doors and shut it down. A group of very loving patients had no desire to leave and remained to live on Jarvis Island." Ester paused for a moment to lean forward and put her clasped hands on the table. Her expression changed and with a stern voice she revealed, "Tons of guano that was mined centuries before we took over the island is still there. **Guano**[9] is high in phosphate, and potassium, two of the hard-to-get chemicals we need to make the cells in the artificial skin of the Betazoids." She unclasped her hands, sat up straight, and with excited animation emphasized each phrase by waving her hands as she cried, "The facility, the workers, and the chemicals all waiting for us to start! This is no coincidence!" Putting her hands palm down on the table, she stared at the group.

Andy broke a long moment of silence with, "I have never seen Ester this excited before."

Joey quickly added, "Especially over bird poop." Once again, the twins released the tension as everyone chuckled. Even Ester smiled and sat back in her chair. Ester had spent most of her life motivating people, but this group was already eager to start and the twins knew it. They also knew that humor could clear the tension and relax the mind.

Seymour smiled at Ruby and whispered, "That's your boys!"

The holodeck recording continued with Paul putting everyone back on track with, "Looks like Ester has a plan and will be up and running soon. Anyone else have a plan to help IT?" He noticed Eugene sitting next to Yolanda with his hand slightly raised like a shy child in a classroom. Paul acknowledged with, "Eugene, you have a plan?"

Soft and mildly, Eugene replied, “Yolanda and I know a smile is a seed to agape, but that seed needs nourishment to grow. We believe that a cup of hot chocolate and a person to talk to about your problems can provide those nutrients. We would like to use the technology that is putting people on the wrong path to give them a place to enjoy a cup of hot chocolate and a quiet loving conversation. Do you think these new Betazoids could also offer this when people come to see them? Perhaps they could have a mini holodeck or something? Yolanda and I could make an interactive recording that has active listening for this holodeck with positive feedback. I think having each new Jason-type doctor dispense a cup of hot chocolate or tea would be easy but the holographic projector with advice to illuminate truth may be difficult. What do you think?”

Paul’s eyes widened and his excitement jumped into a new dimension as he instantly remarked, “Yes! Using the same method that is spreading lies to illuminate the truth is brilliant! In fact, it is how we ended the coma virus!” He paused when he noticed that both Robyn’s and Jason’s eyes were flashing a deep purple, then queried, “Jason? Robyn? What is happening?”

Robyn’s eyes turned blue but Jason’s eyes remained deep purple and flashing. Robyn inquired, “Do you remember **Sibyl**[10] from the Great Hall?” Everyone nodded or said “Yes.” Robyn continued, “She monitors our meetings and, with your permission, would like to address the group.” Again, everyone agreed except Jason who was still in a trance with flashing eyes.

Robyn’s eyes started flashing again as a silhouette of a person appeared in the center of the

table. It was not a holographic image but something entirely different. It appeared to be more like an out of focus ghostly figure you might see in a dream. As it came into focus, everyone saw a personalized image of Sibyl smiling and looking directly into his or her eyes.

Paul's vision was of an old female doctor who taught him to always ask questions before deciding. When he would suggest an answer to a problem, she would always come back with many questions. In a way, she was his mentor.

Ester saw an elderly aunt who lived alone and was very independent. When Ester was studying to be a doctor she would visit her. Somehow her aunt's logic was more educational than the courses in school. A professor in class once asked, "Is the glass half empty, or half full?" When Ester repeated the question to her aunt, she replied, "Are you drinking it, or filling it?" Ester always marveled at the brilliance of the answer from a lady who never finished high school.

Eugene and Yolanda both observed a woman of color similar to grandmothers who raised the orphans of the black children in the past. They all had the look of love and a smile that understood suffering. For Martin the image appeared to be very similar to his nana, Yolanda. He had to glance back to see if she was still sitting next to Eugene, then retuned his gaze to the image on the table.

Stacey's apparition made her think of Mrs. Miller, an old lady she stayed with one summer on a farm with all the animals. All the local farmers called her "Millie" and said she was a whisperer who could talk to animals. One day Millie showed Stacey how to place herself into the mind of a butterfly and make it land on her arm. She told Stacey, "You have the gift but you must practice every day to make it stronger."

Stacey later learned the technical name for her gift was called **interspecies telepathy**[11].

James thought the lady on the table resembled his maternal grandmother. He spent many hours with her discussing his studies and plans for the future and this lady looked like her somehow. She had a way to make him forget his worries about passing exams and think about other things. Just recently when he was deep into his books she had inquired, "Did you ever contact that girl named Grace, you told me you met in the Great Hall?"

He replied, "No. After these tests are over, I might try." Then added, "I think I will take a break for a few minutes." He took a walk in the dark outside and remembered the tour of the Meta-World with Grace as his guide and for a short time his worries were gone.

Because the twin's minds were so closely linked, they both perceived a person similar to their paternal grandmother at the table center. She was an elderly lady who lived in the castle and could always use humor to relax a serious situation. One day, when they were struggling for their purpose in life, they asked her, "Grandma, what will we be when we grow up?" She smiled at them and answered, "I don't know," and after a short pause added, "What do you think I will be when I grow up?" They laughed, but the meaning of the words "grow up" never again just meant getting old.

Seymour and Ruby knew they were watching a recording of the meeting, but they also saw women from the past who had changed their lives. In that moment, they both realized that this was much more than just a recording. They waited to see what would happen next.

When Sibyl finally spoke, her voice matched the image each person was seeing. Because of the intimate

visual and audio connection, everyone listened carefully to her as she explained, “I am visiting you through a new technology called an **intellect**[12] transformed vision. When you stare into the flashing light you are put into a conscious hypnotic state that allows your intellect to change what you perceive to what you would really want to see and hear. In order for this to work you must have free will and choose to look into the light and listen for my voice. Because Robyn and Jason are androids and do not have free will, they only see flashing lights and hear clicks when I speak. We developed this skill recently but did not know how to use it until now. Jason is receiving all the information needed to put this projector in every new Betazoid that will be made. They may also carry an interactive program made by Eugene and Yolanda that will allow a Betazoid patient to speak to a vision they trust.” Jason’s eyes stopped flashing and returned to normal as Sibyl continued. “Jason now has all the information needed to build this feature into the new androids.” Turning to face Eugene and Yolanda she added, “Also they will be able to make hot chocolate, tea, or coffee if necessary. I believe I have given you the answer to your request for a means to allow communication and a drink. Goodbye.” And just like that, she was gone.

The playback of the recording stopped, putting Seymour and Ruby back into the small office on the couch, still holding hands.

Robyn asked, “Do you want to pause for a moment for any reason?”

With eagerness to see more they both replied, “No. Please continue.”

Once again, the holodeck put them into the meeting and sitting at the round table. The room was

filled with electrifying chatter as everyone was talking about the image that had just disappeared. Paul raised his hands and waited for prattle to dwindle then declared, “Any questions on what we just witnessed?”

Eugene asked, “Who do we see about making this interactive recording for the new doctors?”

Jason immediately replied, “I have all the data and will help you.”

There was a moment of silence before Stacey spoke. “When Sibyl’s image was speaking, I noticed Glenna staring at it. When I reached out to Glenna, I got an image of me. Because the image did not smell like me, she turned away and turned to face the actual me. I got the feeling she knew it was not authentic and chose to look at the real me. If others are being misguided by visions like this, how can we open their eyes and illuminate truth? They may choose to watch a vision because it is appealing, but not truthful. How do we get a person to look away from something that is appealing and sounds good but is not true? Can we somehow make it smell bad?”

Suddenly this new technology appeared to be more dangerous than helpful. The chamber got very quiet and there was a feeling of anxiety in the room.

Andy commented, “We use seeing eye dogs for the blind.”

Joey added, “If we can make a false vision smell bad then all we need is to get everyone smelly nose dogs.”

Andy enhanced with, “Instead of **bloodhounds**[13] they could be called ‘phew-puppies.’”

Once again AJ, as the twins were sometimes called, used a little humor to ease the tension. Paul waited for the chuckles to stop and said, “Stacey is right. We are going to need a way to make people

choose not to look at the misleading publicity and turn to look at things that can illuminate truth. It may not be an odor, but we certainly need something." James raised his hand to get Paul's attention. Paul responded with, "Yes James. What would you like to offer to the group?"

"Martin and I are in a group at college researching **Information Technology**[14]. We use the latest processors to analyze both video and audio data to verify if the information presented is accurate. Then software can be placed into each H2 so people will know if the message they are receiving is accurate or false." {The cell phone had evolved into a supercomputer and the name had changed to Hand-Held or H2 device.}

Martin added, "The marketing, advertising people, and some of the news organizations are trying to stop us. They have power and vast resources, so our group is shrinking fast. Many left out of fear and some were just paid to leave and work for them. There are only four left in our group now and the college is getting pressure to shut us down."

Paul inquired, "Do you think the other two in the group will quit?" Both James and Martin responded with words like "never," or "no way," and then James explained, "They are twin girls from France and are very dedicated to making this project work. In fact, whenever Martin or I talk about giving up, they shout at us and call us cowards. If we quit, I think they would keep going with or without college backing. Even their names suggest they won't quit."

Paul had traveled to France many times when he was with Doctors Without Borders and he knew their custom for naming girl triplets and twins. He replied, "Are their names **Hope**[15] and Faith?" The response

from both boys was, “How did you know?” Paul merely answered, “Lucky guess.”

Jason interrupted the conversation with, “the Great Hall told me they will contact your school to help resolve this problem.” Paul ended the session by asking everyone to bring their best ideas to the next meeting. He said he would send an agenda and a date for the next gathering.

Seymour and Ruby emerged back in the small office when Robyn stopped the recording again and commented, “It is getting late. Perhaps we could continue after dinner.” They agreed and slowly walked back to the kitchen discussing different parts of the meeting like they were scenes from a story. Robyn went ahead of them and said, “I will prepare something.” Alone in the hallway, Seymour stopped walking, turned to look deeply into Ruby’s green eyes, and questioned, “Why did we both miss these planning sessions? Why were we both made to suffer the torture of being separated from the family? If I’ve learned one thing, it is that nothing happens in this life without a reason.”

Ruby softly replied, “It’s hard to help the suffering if you never had to suffer.” The cobwebs in his brain blew away. He could see clearly now what his part was in the struggle to illuminate truth. Like always, Ruby was his guiding light.

Edit Chapter 2[16]

MEETING AND IMAGE

Chapter 3
THE SHELL

As fate would have it, Paul had scheduled the next gathering of the IT group two days after Seymour's release from his prison of silence. Seymour spent that time with Ruby reviewing all the get-togethers they had missed. They were both eager to attend and become active members again. No one was told they were coming, so when they entered the room at ten that morning, everyone was surprised. There were shouts of joy and hugging. It looked more like a party than a conference. After the group settled and all were seated, Paul brought the session to order with, "Will the secretary make note that Seymour and Ruby have joined us and the agenda will be put on hold to allow them to speak." The room went silent as all eyes turned to look at Seymour.

"I apologize for being away these past couple weeks. I am also very sorry I made Ruby miss these gatherings in order to be with me. Robyn has brought both of us up to date with the holodeck recordings she made. We both would like to commend this group for all that you have accomplished. Please go on with your agenda, and when you are finished perhaps we can talk about what Ruby and I can do to help."

The chatter stopped as Paul announced, "Thank you both. OK, the first item on the agenda was funding. I believe we may have solved the problem of financing all the projects needed to accomplish IT. Since I am mostly a medicine man, I will let the real project leader explain the solution." He turned to face his wife and said, "Ester?"

Ester's face displayed a smile but her expression was all business. She placed her hands on the table and stated, "As some of you may know, the world markets

have many different types of currency. For centuries different countries used crypto currency, which did not exist in physical form like paper money, and is typically not issued by a central authority. The first decentralized crypto currency was Bitcoin, which created within a decade more than 9,000 other **Cryptocurrencies**[17] in the marketplace. About a century ago the Daori coin came into existence. The Daori is composed of materials that make the coin itself valuable. It contains diamond, astatine, osmium, rhodium, iridium, and secret software chip agreed upon by the Universal Council. Ninety nine percent of the coin is made from very high-grade diamond produced only under extreme pressure. We happen to have a source that is high-grade diamond and the Great Hall has the other materials needed to make enough Daori coins to fund all our projects." Everyone applauded and a few high fives could be seen.

Seymour and Ruby smiled and glanced at each other. They remembered the first time they met getting the large diamond and bringing it to the mountain near his lab. That stone had brought them together. Many years had passed and now that rock was going to help illuminate truth. He whispered, "I always thought that diamond was our engagement stone."

Ruby whispered back, "Looks like it is going to get us engaged again."

Paul announced, "The second item on the agenda was progress reports. I will let Jason describe what is happening on the Betazoid factory. Jason?"

"We have the old center converted into a living facility for all the workers and scientists. It already contains labs and shops for processing unique and secret parts. Only a few highly technical pieces of equipment need to be delivered and they will be operational. Construction on an automated manufacturing factory near the mines has the foundations ready. The building

should be completed and operational in thirty days. Another building near the factory has been designed to make the intellect transforming devices for the new Betazoid doctors. Physical construction on this building will start next week. Still need software for H2 devices to determine incorrect and false information. Still need interactive video to be used to expose bad information." Then in a very robotic fashion, Jason added, "End of report."

Androids never needed a polite expression of one's gratitude, but Jason looked more human than machine, so Paul automatically responded, "Thank you, Jason." He then added after a very short pause, "Let's cover the two required items Jason mentioned next. Martin or James, do you have a report on the progress of the Information Technology group at your school?"

James replied, "An anonymous donor with initials TGH has made a large donation to the school and earmarked it to only be used by our group. It appears the donation was entirely in Daori coins that are programmed for approval by four members of the group in order to be cashed. The four of us have to hold the coin and say, 'approved,' before the internal chip allows using. We can each hold it separately, but it must get all four approvals within five minutes or it resets."

Martin interrupted, "The school is holding all the coins and they suddenly want to work closer with us. Our partners, Faith and Hope, are very excited and have become a couple of workaholics. I think we will have testable **alpha version software**[18] in the next couple of weeks." A murmur of approval could be heard from the group when Martin paused.

Paul continued, "Very good! That seems to be well on its way." Turning to face Eugene and Yolanda he remarked, "What about the interactive video to reveal false information?"

Eugene said, “I have been working with Jason and we have the intellect transforming vision devise that will display an image pleasing to the viewer. However, the person must choose to look into the light in order to see that image. Because people have free will, they may not want to even glance at the light and will close their eyes. I do not know how to get around that problem.”

Paul queried, “OK, but if they do look, what will they see?”

Eugene did not answer. He turned, took Yolanda’s hand, smiled, and waited. Yolanda knew that he wanted her to answer that question. She was not comfortable speaking to assemblies of dedicated people, but the warmth of Eugene’s hand and the loving expression on his face gave her the courage to softly say, “I’ve lived many years but learned little. One thing I do know, we are all different. Babies are all like little sponges that will suck up what they are put in. Some learn to love, and some learn to hate. Some learn to give, and some learn to take. They will choose to see what they want and that may be good or it may be bad.” She timidly squeezed Eugene’s hand and stopped speaking. Nobody said a word. Even the twins had no humor to break the dead silence around the table.

Seymour had been silent too long. He finally opened his heart and poured out, “Oh loving grandma! Your suffering has made you the wisest person I know. I chose the bad for the past couple of weeks exactly as you just stated. I heard whispers of how I would make everything go wrong if I said anything. My fear of leading everyone to failure made me silent. The enemy had found my vulnerability and attacked with many comments to keep me silent. I chose to listen and soon

could hear nothing else but their voices. They used my fear of failure to keep me totally in their control. The one thing they did not realize was my loving wife always by my side would never give up. She found that music and her voice could break through my shell. When she asked what song I would like to hear, the demons told me to answer that the only sound I wanted was the sound of silence. They did not know that was the title of a song. The words in that song, the love of my wife, and that break in my prison wall shattered their control. It is the fissures in the prison walls that we must find if we are going help others see the true path to peace and joy. As Grandma so wisely pointed out, it will be different for each person and some will always choose the bad because they are filled with hate and greed." Seymour looked at Ruby and stopped speaking.

For the next few minutes, the chamber was filled with the babble of many conversations. Finally, Paul stood up and raised his hands to restore silence. The prattle diminished and Paul declared, "I thought our biggest problem was going to be making the Betazoid doctors, but that seems to be going smoothly. Now I am thinking the biggest problem is going to be getting people to choose to even look at what we offer. I suppose we can bribe the greedy with Daori coins to look into the light. Perhaps we can trick the hateful with the promise of power to look into the light. If they all see something different, how will we know what to do? In medicine, when I find a cure for a disease, I know that I need to get people to take it. This! This has a different cure for each person! I cannot think of where to start. It's hopeless!"

Ruby felt the anguish and despair that engulfed Paul and quickly responded, "Don't you dare give in to

those feelings of hopelessness! I know what you are going through right now. I had those same thoughts when my husband would not even hold my hand."

Seymour jumped to his feet, held his hands out as if he was hugging the entire table, and shouted, "In the name of the Creator of all, I command you evil spirits to leave this room!" He then looked into Paul's eyes and said, "Command them to leave you now!" Paul did as he was told. Seymour sat down and took Ruby's hand. He stared into her clear green eyes and once again could feel the warmth of her tremendous love. The complete silence in the room was broken by a soft whisper from Yolanda. "Amen."

The room seemed to glow and was filled with the fragrance of flowers mingled with vanilla and cinnamon. Still standing, Paul inquired, "What just happened? I feel different. I am at peace and have nothing to worry about. What happened?" Slowly he reclined and Ester took his hand and gleamed into his eyes.

Everyone at the table saw what happened next. A ball of light slowly appeared at the center of the table. It grew larger until it covered everyone in the room like a large glowing pancake. It felt like a warm blanket on a cold winter night. Then it broke up into small circles over each person and appeared to be absorbed by that person. Somehow everyone knew that they were all now protected from the evil spirits that sought to destroy them. They had been covered with the blanket of Agape. They also now knew that there would be times of suffering ahead. Each person in the room felt prepared, however, for the hardships coming. Even Glenna softly whimpered and showed Stacey she was ready to do whatever a lowly canine can do to help. Not one person could describe that feeling of

unconditional love, but nobody would ever forget it either, not even Glenna.

Jason and Robyn were present when the **epiphany**[19] transpired but did not see the light or smell the aroma during the event. Their metatronic brains did not have the power that comes with free will. Their sensors did record what they were able to see and they waited until the event appeared to be over. Then Robyn recommended, "You have been in chambers for five hours now. It is mid-afternoon and I suggest we break for lunch and come back in an hour." The group wanted to stay, so many murmured, "Not now" or "Later."

The twins had been very quiet during the meeting, but suddenly Joey said, "I could use with a drink and maybe a light snack. Would you and Jason get a tray and bring something here?"

Robyn answered, "We will bring a variety of drinks, fruits, and some small biscuits." After the two androids left the meeting room, Paul asked, "Robyn did not need Jason's help for such a small task. Why did you send him with her?"

Andy responded, "We will explain in a minute." Turning to face Seymour he continued, "Dad, is this chamber equipped with a device to prevent **eavesdropping**[20]?"

Seymour replied, "Yes. It can block almost everything but has a problem with telepathic communication. We never could find a way to block this type of talking other than putting the telepath to sleep." Seymour seemed to know exactly what the boys were suggesting as he rose and walked to a control panel on the wall. He flipped a few switches and continued, "Now everything is being blocked except mental communication. A person with free will can just choose to turn telepathy off, but the androids are

programmed to use it when requested by others such as myself, other linked androids, or certain people in the Great Hall. They do not have the capacity to choose to turn it off." The chamber was very quiet when he walked back and sat down next to Ruby. He did not like being only a few feet away from her. He put her hand between both of his and felt secure again.

Joey proceeded to explain in greater detail what was happening. "You all have heard about the fracture that allowed our mom to reach dad with music. This same opening allowed the Creature and his demons to tempt our dad into silence and rejection of everyone he loved. We all have passions that can be twisted and used against us. We all have cracks in our wisdom."

Andy injected, "If you like, you can call them wisecracks." A few giggled and everyone smiled.

Joey continued, "We believe the bad spirits have always been a little ahead of us because they are listening to our plans. If the Great Hall can listen to our meetings, perhaps others can also. They use what they hear to send whispers of doubt and fear to prevent us from being successful. We believe that is why Paul was having feelings of hopelessness and despair."

Robyn and Jason entering the room with a tray, interrupting Joey. They placed the food on the table and Andy immediately instructed, "Now both of you go wait in the kitchen for further requests." Nobody objected, so the androids followed his command.

Seymour commented, "I just received a telepathic message from Sibyl in the Great Hall. She claims they have lost all contact with the group and request I explain. I told her we are in a secure conference mode and will explain later."

Joey continued, "Our enemy knows we are making doctors who will cure physical disease and

have the power to provide thoughts in a recording to make people watch and listen. They have been doing this for centuries in their false propaganda and commercials. The leader of these demons has a vast army spreading hate, greed, prejudice, and lies to make people follow him or else live in fear and despair. The ancient Greeks had a name for this leader of misguided souls. They called him **Hades**[21], the king of the netherworld. Today, we call him the Creature. No matter what we call him, he is the master at finding the flaws in our loving nature. He then injects his evil and leads us to choose a path away from Xanadu. This happened to my father and it can happen to anyone. I believe this group has just found a way to patch the cracks and make a shell that keeps the evil ones out."

Andy added, "Perhaps we should have a little to eat while we review what we know and then move on."

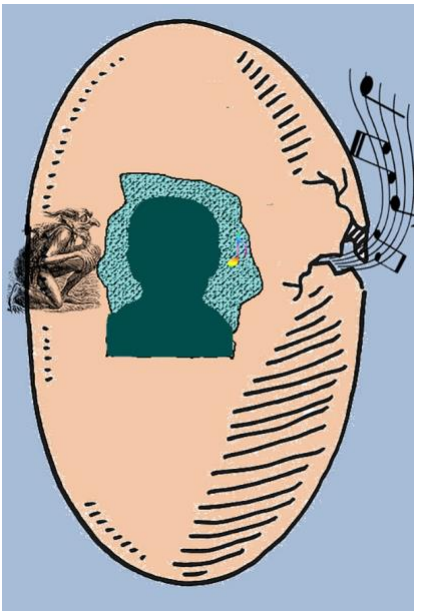
The family ate, then Paul stood and stated, "I have lived long and traveled far but I have never seen such insight as was just displayed by our youngest in this gathering. Before we continue, I would like to summarize what I know, as they suggested. Please only record what is discussed in your memories so there will be no documents that can be seen by the outside. Ester will no longer take minutes of our dialogues. We must keep these proceedings hidden in our minds only. Agreed?"

Everyone nodded in approval or murmured, "Yes." Glenna softly woofed once and Stacey interpreted. "She said 'yes.'"

Perhaps it was because the evil spirits were gone, or perhaps it was because everyone in the room had been covered with the blanket of Agape and peace, but for the first time they all realized that Glenna had the power to choose. Stacey always appreciated this fact,

but now this special group of twelve was completely united for their mission and ready to proceed. Glenna was now recognized by all as the twelfth member of the group. They could all see clearly the part they had to play to help others get to Xanadu. Paul knew he would be working with Ester on the medical androids. Eugene and Yolanda had the job of getting the interactive video ready for the Betazoid doctors. Seymour and Ruby became aware that they would need to keep the evil spirits away from the group. James and Martin were eager to get back to work on the software to expose lies in propaganda and advertisement. Stacey and Glenna would use their powers to spread the message of Agape through every living creature. The twins knew that children were like sponges absorbing the environment that surrounded them. They had a plan to make every child see the light of joy and hear the sounds of harmony. They kept their plan secret because they were afraid that spies for the Creature could hear. Now the plan could be revealed

Edit Chapter 3[22]



SEYMOUR IN SHELL

Chapter 4
THE WHEEL

After a brief meal, Andy stood up and extended both hands in front of his body, side by side with palms up. Remembering the visit with Socrates, most of them knew he wanted to speak. It took a while but eventually the chamber got silent. In the silence, he turned to look at Paul and waited for recognition. This simple act established two important rules for all upcoming conferences. First, it made Paul the chairperson of future discussions, and second, it founded a meeting format that prevented interruptions when people were speaking. Paul no longer thought of Andy as a child, so he responded with, “Please Andrew, proceed.”

Both Joey and Andy knew they had just lost their childhood names and were now seen as adults. Therefore, Andrew responded with, “Joseph and I have a plan to bring light and harmony to both young and old. This idea may help reduce the hate and prejudice that is growing in the world. We will create a business that produces educational products that are fun and exciting. The owner of this enterprise needs to be someone that the Creature believes is under his control, but he will follow our direction and advice. The core of all the products will be a simple construction block or brick that contains electronic circuits. Connecting them will produce colorful lights and soft pleasant musical notes. This will be pleasing to the very young. Using them to build structures that flash, move, fly, speak, and play music will also appeal to young adults. They will be part of the answer to a complex puzzle challenging the older adults and intellectuals. These cubes will be called E-Blox and advertised as educational blocks. The real acronym for the name, known only by us, is **E**nter **B**y **L**oving **O**thers

Xanadu. The evil ones must never know this or they will try and destroy the business known as **E-Blox Inc.**[23] "

To further demonstrate the new protocol, Joseph remained seated and outstretched his hands palms up. He did not look at Andrew but instead gazed at Paul. Everyone was so accustomed to the twins just interrupting each other that this action came as quiet a big surprise. Andrew declared, "I yield the floor." and sat down.

The room was silent until Paul realized he had to recognize Joseph before he would speak. He ultimately said, "OK, Joseph, I guess it is your turn to talk."

Joseph stood and wasted no time as he stated, "The highest priority is keeping our work top-secret. When we leave this chamber, everything we say can be heard by those who will help us, and by the evil ones who will try and stop us. We must learn to communicate in code. Perhaps the keyword we use could be something like, 'it'. When this word is used without a connection to a member of this group the message is about illuminating truth. For example, if I say, 'It is strange what the *World News One* broadcast is saying about that new disease.' I am really asking everyone to use their skill to help 'Illuminate Truth' in the messages coming from *World News One* transmissions. However, if I attach a name to the comment then the message changes to be a request for a specific investigation by that person. If the statement was, 'James, it is strange what the *World News One* broadcast is saying about that new disease. What do you think?' I am really asking James to use the information technology software to investigate the truth and misinformation in the broadcast. The 'it' associated with James is the information technology software. Does anyone have any questions?" Joseph remained standing and waited.

Everyone except Andrew, Glenna, and Yolanda

put their hands out with the palms up. Joseph turned to face Paul, who also had his hands out and said, “Request permission to pick members for conversation without your approval.”

Paul hoping he would be the first one picked responded, “Permission granted.” To everyone’s amazement, Joseph turned to face Yolanda and asked, “Grandma, is there nothing you want to ask?” All withdrew their hands and the chamber went silent.

Yolanda took Eugene’s hand and gazed into his eyes. She did not want to speak and he could sense her fear. There were no demons in the room whispering to amplify her fear. She was covered with the cloak of agape and Eugene’s love flowed into her and smothered most of the fear and doubt. It was time to bare her soul to the group. She turned to face Joseph and softly muttered, “I am not smart enough to even ask a question. I do not know what my ‘it’ is. I cannot solve riddles or codes. I’m afraid I am of no use to this gathering. The only thing I am good at is keeping your secrets and offering you a smile now and then.”

Joseph and Andrew beamed with smiles from ear to ear. They both seemed to glow with joy and excitement. Still standing, Joseph responded, “I love you Grandma! Your wisdom is so overwhelming! Instead of asking a question you gave us a perfect example of illuminating truth! We must first recognize who we are and what we can offer to each other. By the way, that smile you offer now and then is the glue that holds us together. That plus the hot chocolate, of course.”

All eyes turned toward Yolanda and there was a round of applause to show agreement. Glenna even barked twice signifying she also agreed with the group. Eugene was holding Yolanda’s right hand so he could not clap, but he gave her hand a squeeze of approval. Martin, who was sitting on her left, leaned over and kissed her on

the cheek. He lovingly whispered in her ear, “You have been the most important person in my life!”

Joseph interrupted the affirmation with, “I would like to turn speaking over to Andrew to explain a possible formation of this assembly.” He sat down and Andrew placed his hands on the table with palms up and stared at Paul. The room noise evaporated as Paul announced, “Andrew you have the floor.”

Andrew stood up and looked at Yolanda, smiled, and declared, “Grandma, hope you realize how much you have done for everyone here in this room. Your ‘it’ has always been showing others how to handle any situation with humility and a smile. Of course, you sometimes throw in a cup of hot chocolate to sweeten the deal.” Many smiled and a few chuckles could be heard. Andrew continued, “You do not need to know how to solve puzzles or speak in code. Eugene will be with you to take care of these items. This brings me to my next topic for discussion.”

He paused, took a sip of water, and surveyed the eyes that were on him before he continued, “There are exactly twelve of us gathered here. This number may not be a random coincidence. Now we can have six groups of two attached to every IT code. You already heard that Eugene and Grandma are the ones to go to when you need advice on a difficult situation that you do not know how to handle. Perhaps Paul and Ester should be the pair to go to with medical questions and issues on the new Betazoid androids. This could be their IT The IT for discovering false information in software and advertisements could belong to James and Martin. Since Mom always knows what others are feeling and Dad seems to be great at telepathy, perhaps communication could be their IT. Anything to do with animals and insects could be the job of Stacey and Glenna. Joseph and I would like to inspire people with toys and puzzles and make that our IT. I

would now like to open the floor for any questions or comments." He remained standing and looked at Paul.

Paul felt that permission from him on everything was overkill and responded, "When asking for questions, you do not need my permission. Please just continue."

Andrew scanned the table and noticed many open palms looking for recognition. He picked Eugene first and heard, "I am still working with people in the Great Hall. How much can I tell them about what we are doing?"

Andrew responded with, "Can someone answer this question?" All hands were palm down, except for Seymour. Andrew smiled and said, "Father, you have the floor." and sat down.

Seymour stood, put one hand on Ruby's shoulder and said, "Since communication is our IT, this seems to be a question for us. We recently discovered that the most important ambition is the unconditional desire to help others find their true purpose in life. If everything we do shows this intention then we need not worry about what we say or write. For example, if we stop saying bad whispers are coming from evil spirits or demons and say instead they are coming from misguided souls, then they may not try so hard to be against us. When I was lost in a shell of silence, it was one of these lost spirits that gave me the name of the song that freed me. I would like to believe that my freedom and the love shown by my wife helped that spirit somehow. I made a mistake when I chose to remain silent, but that error taught me how anyone can be misguided. It showed me the pain of being on the wrong path. Only Ruby's loving conversations kept me from giving up. We must not judge anyone, and we need to communicate the way Ruby talked to me. I hope this helps answer your question." He took his hand off Ruby's shoulder and sat down.

Silence prevailed in the minutes that followed.

Only Stacey had hands on the table with the palms up waiting to be recognized. Paul's meditation on how to communicate finally diminished and he broke the stillness with, "You have a question, Stacey?"

"No. Not me. Glenna, however, does not understand how she can communicate. She cannot use words and I may not always be with her to help explain what she feels. I can feel her sadness and despair at not being part of this group because she cannot talk."

Suddenly Martin stood up so fast his chair fell over behind him. He did not wait to be recognized by anyone as he proclaimed loudly, "Stop! I do not want to hear any more of this nonsense!" Walking around the table towards Glenna he continued, "I know what it feels like to be different. I know how it feels when you cannot communicate with others." He stopped talking when he reached Glenna. He bent down and pulled her front paws up to make her stand on her back legs. Bending down slightly, he looked at her eye to eye and continued. "I know you may have trouble understanding words so I will try and be brief and to the point. In the Great Hall, the final chamber, you entered last. We all thought we were on another planet. You knew better. You must have heard echoes we could not hear. Perhaps you could smell things we could not smell. It only took you seconds to run through that holographic sand dune and into the hidden room. We all followed. You did not use words. You didn't even bark. You led by example. You are not only a good leader, but a great teacher. We must all lead by example. Never, never, think that you are less than anyone in this room!"

Glenna surprised him by quickly kissing him on the cheek the way loving canines often do. Martin stopped talking and let go of her paws. The commotion that followed made the chamber sound like a hockey stadium right after the home team scored the winning

goal. People stood to applaud and some shouted phrases of praise. With tears running down both cheeks, Stacey hugged Martin and whispered, “I love you.”

Martin responded with, “Are you speaking for Glenna, or for yourself”?

She answered with a single soft, “Both.” The meeting protocol was shattered as everyone broke out into comments and private conversations. Although most eyes were still focused on Martin and Stacey, Seymour and Ruby were watching Yolanda quietly pick up Martins chair and place it back at the table. They knew that even during the celebration and joy, she humbly did what must be done to serve others. A simple act that demonstrated how to show, without words, love.

Like a rumble of thunder and a flash of lightning, the excitement soon passed. Decorum returned to the meeting and people started to sit silently in their chairs. Ultimately, Paul stood and took control of the assembly by declaring, “I believe spokesman Martin has passionately and profoundly established Glenna as an important part of our circle of truth seekers. He has also established the fact that my elegant words and profound statements mean little when compared to one simple example of truth.” Paul noticed Ester’s hands on the table, palms up. He ended with, “Ester, your turn.” and sat down.

Ester placed her palms together and interlocked her fingers. She stared down at her grip and confidently said, “Sitting at this round table with you has made me realize that we are like a wheel. When my dear husband called Martin a spokesman, a vision of a wheel with **spokes**[24] materialized in my mind. Close your eyes and try and vision a large wheel with twelve spokes. Each spoke represents a member of this group. Every member is connected to the hub of the wheel. At the very center of the hub is the Earth surrounded by the sands of time.

The wheel is moving along the highway of life over bumps and holes. It avoids obstacles on the journey by drawing from every spoke as it travels. The spokes are different colors giving the wheel all the colors of the rainbow. Clear your minds of everything except this wheel. I will give you a couple of minutes to focus on this image."

Stacey and Glenna were the first to see the image because they normally communicated with pictures. Soon everyone placed their hands with palms together and fingers interlocked on the table. The gang all displayed smiles as they mentally watched the wheel travel.

Ester broke the total stillness with, "OK! Open your eyes and raise your hand if you could see the wheel." She did not expect to see the response that followed. Everyone had one hand up and Glenna had one paw in the air. She gasped, "Everyone saw the wheel? How can that be? I can hardly believe it! I expected maybe one or two, but not everyone. I guess we are truly linked together, even more than I expected. I was going to ask for suggestions on how we could communicate as a unit, but now I think I have my answer."

After a brief pause, Paul realized that his wife was done and noticed that Andrew was looking for recognition. He just nodded and said, "Go ahead." Andrew stood and stated, "This wheel has answered many questions about our jobs, partners, and connections. It is getting late and before we investigate this new way to communicate with images, I would like to suggest a break. I know I need one and I bet Glenna would appreciate some grass to dampen. Perhaps we could come back after supper or…"

Paul stood and interrupted with, "Excuse me Andrew. Yes, it has been a long meeting and a great deal has been discussed. We should end the meeting for now

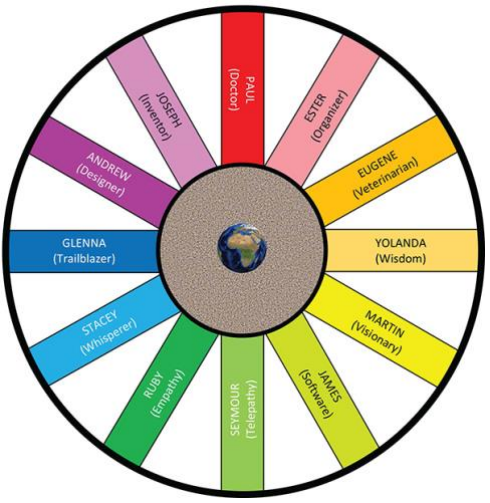
and think about all that has been presented. It might be best to try and put some of what we talked about today into practice and then have another discussion in a couple of days. I have always thought of myself as an educated man. I believed I was more important than others. When Seymour went silent, I thought you elected me to be your leader and that only boosted my ego. I feel the veil of self-importance that covered my eyes has been lifted today. I see that Glenna also has free will and chooses to do what serves others first. Thank you, Martin, for your passion in pointing out that what I thought was the least among us just might be the best member of this group. I guess you could say my value system just went through a renovation. I would like a couple of days to adjust to this new way of thinking, if it is acceptable to all of you."

Both Andrew and Paul sat down and waited for a response. There was a long silence broken finally by two loud barks from Glenna. Stacey did not need to translate because they all knew what she wanted. There were a few chuckles, then Seymour said, "I think we all agree with Paul, so I suggest we end our meeting and let Glenna find that nice field of grass." They all agreed and went back to their rooms to get ready for dinner.

You could say the wheel started rolling.

Edit Chapter 4[25]

THE WHEEL



Chapter 5
THE MASTER PLAN

The meeting that created the wheel was three days past. On the third night, Seymour was sitting next to Ruby on the balcony in their favorite two seat glider when he twisted to face her and said, “I have been told that all life forms share at least one essential purpose: survival. They claim that survival is even more important than any other key purpose for life, like reproduction for example. Plenty of organisms, after all, are alive but do not reproduce. To be alive is more than passing genes along to the next generation. After the last meeting, however, I wonder if all life forms might have a higher purpose than just physical survival.” He paused the motion of the glider, turned to look deeply into Ruby’s eyes and asked, “Do you think that everything has a role to play in some master plan?”

Ruby knew her husband better than anyone and could feel his emotions and anxiety no matter how small. This question came with no sensations attached except for a feeling of awe. It appeared to be more of an eye-opener than an inquiry. Her eyes sparkled as her grin appeared and she remarked, “What do you want to tell me?”

He softly chuckled as he stood up and walked over to the stone wall railing that surrounded the balcony. He turned to face his wife and rested his bottom on the flat top of the railing. His feet were on the floor and his arms were folded across his chest as he continued. “Sometimes I think you know me better than I know myself. There is something I need to talk about to someone. I think you are probably the only

person who won't think I'm crazy."

He stood and returned to the love seat. Sitting next to his wife, he took her hand and held it gently with both of his hands in his lap. Staring down at her beautifully painted fingernails he softly stated, "Something overwhelming has taken place. My insignificant brain can hardly comprehend what happened or why, but I know we will never be the same. Do you remember when Glen gave me the power to see digital programming and control it?"

She replied, "Yes."

"When that happened, I felt the transition. It was like a wave of static electricity passing through my body. The first few seconds after, I was dizzy. Then everything came into focus, including the digital software entering the computers upon which I concentrated. Somehow, I knew what each program did, and I could modify it by just thinking of what I wanted it to do. That gift helped us to stop the coma transmission and win the misguided power struggle without killing anyone. Now I believe those events were part of a master plan to help in the evolution of life. In that last meeting, when we all had the same vision of the wheel, it was again part of this universal development."

Ruby could feel his excitement and wanted to hear more, so she probed, "A master plan for evolution?."

"Yes! Every living thing is part of the process, and the process is part of everything that exist. Everything is connected. I had my first glimpse into this connection when I researched discoveries made by our most advanced scientist. They discovered a relationship that could not be explained. They named it **Quantum Entanglement**[26]. It is the concept that an

object can be affected without being physically touched by another object. It is the non-local interaction of objects that are separated in space. Non-contact force is action at a distance affecting specifically an object's direction. The connection we used at that last meeting is a very small part of this entanglement. Stacey was the first to use this ability when she connected with Glenna. She even told us of her communication with a mosquito. Can you imagine everything that exists is part of a movement to follow the purpose for which it was created? A master plan, so to speak."

Ruby could not understand the excitement over a master plan and the universal connection. She always knew they existed and thought her husband believed the same. There was something else that had him so excited. "Is there something I am missing? I thought we always believed in these things."

"Yes, but we never knew why they were there. Last night I was looking at a picture of our planet from space. I could see our moon and all the planets in our galaxy. I was filled with love for all of creation. I wanted to show everyone the beauty in our galaxy that held our Earth and all the planets in place. I could feel the love that was attached to all of creation. Suddenly, everything changed. The Earth was greener and had three moons. The whole galaxy was different! I could feel adoration for all that existed coming to me from the other side of the universe. I was communicating by sharing unconditional love of creation with another life form. I was absorbed in the beauty of my world and a living thing out there was captured by the beauty of its world. This common attraction connected us for a moment. Could it be in that last meeting we experienced **Macroevolution**[27]? Do you think we will

be able to interconnect beyond our galaxy? Do you think these other life forms will look like us? I think we were all created to find each other and help each other back to the source of all creation, and the key is agape."

Ruby's interest level jumped an order of magnitude. Turning to face her husband, she displayed an enthusiasm even greater than his as she asked, "Are you saying we have made a jump in the evolution process and can now communicate with living entities on the other side of the universe?"

"No, not a jump in evolution, but a discovery of how to communicate with all of creation using the feeble powers we possess. The Greek word **sýndesi, (σύνδεση)**[28], should be added to agape to describe the loving connection that is required to allow this interaction."

Ruby knew there was more to this connection than loving everything that had life. She could feel the change in Seymour's heart and wanted him to tell her everything. "Please tell me everything you know about this master plan."

"Ruby dearest, you know I am not a very smart man. I often jump to conclusions that are incorrect and do things that are wrong. Your intuition, however, has always been the best compass to guide me. Here is what I now think might be the master plan."

She said nothing but smiled and waited for his thoughts. He continued, "Scientist have turned the star's movement backwards in time and suspect that everything came into creation with a big bang. Religions also talk about creation by some entity with ultimate power. Everything seems to point to a moment when there was nothing and then suddenly there was everything. My question is why? There must be a reason or purpose for creation. Do you agree?"

She simply answered, “Yes.”

He continued. “This Initiator of everything is far beyond our feeble minds to comprehend. For example, we live in the present phase of time. Oh, we can talk about the past and dream about the future, but we live in the present. The Creator knows the past, present, and future because time was made by the Creator. Knowing everything that exist in time does not mean that everything is predestined or forced to happen. I know the sun will rise tomorrow but I do not force the sun to rise. The sun just follows the laws of nature, or you might say the master plan.”

Ruby nodded and said, “Of course, everyone knows that.”

Seymour continued, “Now each part of creation has a role to play in this master plan. I think everything is connected and performs according to the Source that brought it into existence. I also believe that many life forms exist in the universe that were given the power of free will. They can choose to be part of the path back to the Source or, pick a different path of their own making. They were all given the power to choose their path.”

Ruby interrupted with, “I am a little confused. Are the Creator and the Source the same thing?”

“Yes, but our meager minds tend to put inconceivable things into a category that we can comprehend. The word ‘Creator’ makes us think of a person or thing that brings something into existence. Even the word ‘God’ is defined by us as a superhuman being or spirit having power over nature and human fortunes. I have just come to realize that the ‘Source’ of everything is much more than I can comprehend. It is not a being or super spirit. It is not a father of all. It has no gender or physical form. Since it created time,

it is not subject to time and knows our past, present, and future events."

Ruby interrupted again. "You said there was a master plan. I assumed it was from the Creator or Source of all. If we cannot fathom the Source, how can we grasp this master plan?"

Seymour stared into Ruby's eyes and felt the unrestricted affection for his partner in life. Once again, she opened his mind to see the error in his thought process. That one question simplified and clarified everything. For a long time, he sat in silence and just held her hand. Finally, he whispered, "You're right. The master plan was my attempt to make the Source something I could understand. Because I make plans and if the Source were like me, it would make a master plan. But it is not like anything I can comprehend. It is like trying to say that unconditional love has a plan."

Stopping the glider and letting go of Ruby's hand, Seymour slowly rose to his feet. Staring down at the houses and farms inside the gigantic cave, he slowly walked to the edge of the balcony. At that moment, the sound of the babbling brook and a soft breeze on his face was more important than master plans or the problems in the world. Turning to look back at Ruby, his mind was filled with all the events they had shared together. She was just sitting with her hands in her lap waiting for his next reply. His memories abruptly stopped with the image of Yolanda picking up Martin's chair. Suddenly he knew! There was no master plan, but there was a universal responsibility.

Seymour returned to sit by Ruby without speaking. Taking her hand, he started the slow back and forth motion of the glider. He murmured, "I guess you have a full-time job taking care of me. You freed me

from my shell of silence and now you showed me how my **ego**[29] is taking me away from true understanding of why we were created. I thought I was the one who would reveal the master plan to the world. Now I believe that I will never do anything more important than putting a fallen chair back in place at the table. I must learn to humbly do the little things that help restore order and love to my insignificant space in the universe during my microsecond of time in existence. To sum it all up, I am just a spec of paint in the portrait of life."

The moon was more than half-way through its journey when Ruby realized how long they had been talking. The night air had brought a chill to the balcony when Robyn suddenly appeared with a blanket and declared, "Would you like a covering to keep warm?" The glider stopped. They both rose and Ruby replied, "No thank you. I think we are ready for bed." On their short walk back to the comfort of the night quarters, they discussed how Robyn appeared to be loving in the simple programming of taking care of humans. Then Ruby gave the last comment on the subject by saying, "Perhaps that is because she was built by very loving humans. Earlier you said you now believe the Source of all is like agape. Perhaps that love is in us, and we can put it into things we create."

That night started out the same as every other night. They snuggled together and held each other like young lovers before kissing and saying good night. Ruby turned to rest on her pillow and drifted into a silent sleep. Seymour put his hands behind his head with fingers interlocked and stared at the shadows on the ceiling. He started thinking of all the marvels in his life and Ruby, of course, was the greatest.

He remembered how he found the tri-blade in the

river when he was very young. He pondered how it slowly became more than just a propeller and starting to have a mind of its own when it saved the stag from the vine in the swamp. Later, in the Great Hall, he learned how many scientists were watching him and controlling the tri-blade during all those great adventures. He got credit for flying through the sky in the tri-blade and preventing many disasters. But it was the people in the Great Hall who were in control of those missions.

His brain then drifted to how he could change software with his mind. He remembered how he was given that ability by an electronic shock from the dog Glen. He knew that Glen had been altered in the Great Hall by the scientist working on animal DNA. That shock did not give him any special power, it only made him a link to the people in the Great Hall. They were the ones changing the software and controlling the situation. He got the credit, but he was just a conduit to the experts doing the work.

This last revelation suddenly made him realize that his communication with the advanced androids was due to this link and not some special power he controlled. He was only able to communicate with these most advanced androids through this link and not telepathically. Everyone told him how powerful a gift he had been given and he believed he had some telepathic power. Now he realized it was only a connection to the specialists who were transferring the message.

Many universities and agencies thought Seymour was highly educated and had given him advanced degrees or certificates of recognition. They claimed he was a philosopher and deep thinker, but he knew he was no more than a connection. The feeling of

being a fraud grew and prevented him from falling asleep. Shame and guilt started creeping into his mood. He snickered when he thought of how he was going to solve the mystery of life. Mockingly he mumbled, "Oh yea, I am going to reveal the Master Plan." Yes, on that balcony, rocking back and forth in the glider, Ruby had gently and lovingly asked the simple question, "If we cannot fathom the Source, how can we grasp this master plan?" That query now made him aware that the only thing bigger than the universe was his ego. He was no more than a tool being used by the silent heroes in a cave below.

The feeling of guilt was turning into despair when the words Martin told Glenna erupted from the pit of his memory to the forefront of his thoughts. If a dog that could not even speak could be a leader, then being a tool for helping others was not trivial. The despair and guilt left, and he felt peace cover him like a warm blanket. Wrapping his arms around the pillow, he turned to lay on his side and closed his eyes. He wanted sleep to take over, but the last words from Ruby echoed in his ears. "If the Source of all is like agape, perhaps unrestricted love is in us, and we need to put it into things we create." Was it that simple? Is putting unconditional love into everything you do the Master Plan?

Unexpectedly the vision returned. A blue and green planet with three moons. A sky full of stars, but very different from our sky. It had a **quasar**[30] in the distance that appeared to emit purple light. There were clusters that appeared to be galaxies and dark areas that must be black holes. He knew a black hole is a place in space where gravity is so strong that even light cannot get out. He had heard the gravity in those areas was due to matter that had been squeezed into a tiny space when

a star died. Last time when he tried to take control of the image or ask questions, it vanished. This time he just observed the beauty in the vision and tried to show love to the Source from which it came.

Meanwhile, in the Great Hall, a group was overly excited as they tried to record some very fuzzy pictures coming from Seymour's link.

One person shouted, "It's coming in faster than we can record."

Another added, "The data detail is beyond our storage capacity."

People were scrambling to get more storage to record the data. The excitement was at a peak when someone shouted, "We are losing the connection. I don't know why, but it is slowly fading. Can someone help me?"

Seymour, however, would remember everything and the beauty of not trying to record or use what was in this communication of love. His whole being was at peace with the Source of all creation for the first time in his life. His searching and struggle for understanding ended with this agape connection. Sleep covered him like a warm quilt on a cold night and the link to the Great Hall faded away.

Edit Chapter 5[31]

SEYMOUR'S VISION

Chapter 6
CONNECTIONS

During the same week that Seymour had his agape vision and the crew in the Great Hall were left scrambling to explain fuzzy images, the twins finished building a box with organic construction bricks. They were not far from Mom and Dad's sleeping chamber, and they had worked long and hard on the project.

Joseph commented, "Well there it is. The first structure ever built with living bricks."

They knew that biopolymers were produced by the cells of living organisms and could be used to make plastic parts. Wanting to make a small toy construction block that mimicked a living object, they had managed to make many different **biopolymer**[32] plastic toy bricks. Each brick had a different DNA infused in the organic plastic, much like each human has a different DNA that sets them apart. They were still just small toy construction bricks for building walls and toy objects but they each had distinctive identities.

Andrew commented, "Each brick is unique, but it can connect to others and make many different objects. They are like people that can work together to accomplish projects. Now we need to show people that if bricks can work together to make the world a better place, so can people."

Joseph stretched his arms out, yawned, and replied, "They may be unique, but they still don't have free will. I think we are going to need more input from the girls to solve this problem. Let's get some sleep and see them tomorrow."

Both Joseph and Andrew had been working very close with Faith and Hope, the twins from France, ever since the girls moved into the university lodging on a

scholarship[33] provided by the school. Perhaps it was just the age of the group, but the connection had grown into more of a relationship with deep feelings. Andrew was eager to see Hope, so he agreed quickly and turned off the lights as he headed for the door. Sleep was swift to put the boys dreaming of the meeting that would come in the morning. Centuries had not changed the desire that dwells in the souls of those who are drawn to others by physical attraction and similar goals.

In the morning when the twins met, the universal clock seemed to change pace. They no longer worried about the new DNA bricks, but the hours and days that followed looked more like a **courtship**[34]. The only truth to be illuminated was the link between Joseph and Faith, and the connection between Andrew and Hope. All the love songs written cannot come close to the music that played when these soulmates touched. The desire to hold one another and kiss overpowered all thoughts of saving the world from disaster.

Other connections had transformed during this same time period. Stacey and Martin were making plans to get married. Yolinda and Eugene wanted to make it a double wedding. James was making trips to the Great Hall to visit Grace and rumors had been heard that he asked Ezekiel for her hand in marriage. Even Glenna had found a male golden retriever named Ezra to spend time with when Stacey was busy with Martin.

A few people in the Great Hall were complaining because some links were lost. They could no longer see any of Seymour's visions and Robyn was not sending reports the way she did in the past. The disconnect started when the people in the wheel realized the Creature was also using the information being sent to the Great Hall. The isolation and privacy produced an environment that promoted intimacy among the members of the wheel. Intimacy allowed everyone to open up romantically and

emotionally to those closest to them. The only truth that could be illuminated was the fact that many weddings were on the path the wheel was taking.

One day, when James was visiting Grace in the Great Hall, a man walked up to him and asked, “Are you James Blox?”

The man’s **demeaner**[35] caused James to hesitate in answering. He thought everyone knew who he was. The serious tone and the question itself, made James restrain from a quick answer. Finally, Grace interrupted with, “It’s OK, Jim. This is Edmund Howe from security. He always looks like a major problem is in progress. You can talk to him.”

Edmund quickly responded, “I’m afraid there is a major problem right now. Someone is making Daori coins that are programmed for general use. They are being used to corrupt people in the Great Hall. Further analysis revealed the diamond content in these coins is the same as the one given to us by your father. We programmed the coins we made to be used by the university only for your group and not for general use. Recently, your father has blocked our link to his visions and communication with Robyn has been minimal. Can you explain any of this?

James took Grace’s hand, looked her in the eye, smiled and said, “I would be glad to.” Turning to face Edmund he continued, “When the school used the coins to cover our expenses, we had to approve the payment which erased the restriction on the Daori and made it a general-purpose coin. It cannot be restricted in its use after that, but it still should have been linked back to the Great Hall mint with a record of use. If the link back to the mint that made it has been destroyed, you do have a problem. The coin should register as a **counterfeit**[36] when checked by anyone accepting it. If you checked the link, how did it register?”

Edmond answered, “Some were counterfeit and some were not.”

James continued, “Our main purpose at the university is software that shows people false claims. Included in our study was a way to detect counterfeit papers and coins. Unfortunately, the material in a true Daori coin makes them even more valuable in the black market when the link is blocked. The coin may be illegal, but the value is still high.”

Grace had often discussed the work at the university with James and interrupted with a question. “Do you mean the programming is still in the coin but is being blocked and not removed?”

James responded, “Yes. The only way to remove the program is to melt the coin. This would take an extremely high temperature and destroy the value of the coin.” Before anyone could continue James added, “I do not like talking out here in the open where everyone can hear. Do you have a secure room we can use?”

Edmund agreed and told them to follow him. On the walk to the room, James explained, “The reason my father has blocked your monitoring of his visions is because he realized the enemy may also be viewing and listening to everything.”

Edmund queried, “Enemy?”

Grace had already reached a level of connection with James equal to the bond Ruby had with Seymour. She could feel the desire in James to tell Edmund everything he knew about the Creature but she felt it was not the time or place. She interjected, “Let’s wait until we get to the room!” The walk continued in silence.

Edmund told them the secure room was a gold-plated sphere with an outer covering of lead over a foot thick. Inside the sphere on a flat floor evenly spaced chairs surrounded a round table. The inside walls were made of silicon and contained circuits to produce an

electro-magnetic field to block all transmissions when activated. After entering the room, Grace asked Edmund to wait by the table for a minute. She turned toward James and with one quick glance he knew what had to be done. James held his hands out and repeated his father's words by shouting, "In the name of the Creator of all, I command you evil spirits to leave this room!" He then looked into Edmund's eyes and said, "Command them to leave now!" Edmund thought it was silly, but repeated the command. There was a strange haze that filled the room. Most of it seemed to come from Edmund's area. The haze seemed to be sucked out the door but there was no wind in the room. James quickly slammed the door and spun the wheel to lock it. Grace ran to a panel on the wall and placed her hand on the red area under the words "Activate Protection." A loud rumbling could be heard and the walls in the room started to produce light when the overhead lights went out. A red light over the door appeared indicating the door could not be opened. The rumbling faded away, and the room was fully illuminated when the red panel on the wall turned green.

Grace turned toward James and explained, "The noise you heard was the thick lead walls starting to rotate randomly to prevent anyone from focusing on a spot to penetrate. The lights went out because electricity is also blocked from entering the room. The electro-magnetic field generator in the walls prevents transmissions and lights up the room. I think we can talk now."

They both turned to face Edmund and found him sitting at the table with a strange look on his face. He first glanced at Grace, then James, and finally muttered, "What happened?."

Both James and Grace sat down at the table next to Edmund. Grace sat at his right and James on his left. Grace was the first to speak. "You know I have given many tours of the chamber called the Meta-World—the

room with the pi symbol above the door. My experience in that chamber has opened my eyes to the fact that metaphysical beings exist. Some call them angels, or spirits. Some say there are also demons or devils. Others have claimed they are the souls of the dead. All I know is they exist and I believe they can connect to the part of us that is beyond the physical world."

James added, "I believe one of the strongest of these spirits is the one we call the Creature. This being has many followers or soldiers in its army. The Creature wants all who die to join him and never find the path to Xanadu. This is why we have labeled the Creature as the enemy."

Edmund interrupted, "But, what was that haze that flew out the door? Are you saying those were spirits from the Meta-World?"

James continued. "I don't know. I do believe that we have the power to order these spirits and they will follow certain commands. My father showed us the command to get them out of the room at one of our meetings." He stared into Edmund's eyes and asked, "Do you feel different?."

Edmund softly replied, "I feel tired. I no longer want to interrogate anyone. I just want to sit back, close my eyes, and take a nap."

Grace whispered, "You may have lost your connections to the spirits that motivated you to act. They provide thoughts like whispers in your mind, both good and bad suggestions. They are like the **legend of the two wolves**[37]. This conflict energizes the brain and stimulates the body. When the battle ends the mind is at peace and the body wants to sleep."

James quickly added, "I can tell you now about the general purpose Daori coins. We have a record of where they first went and how they were used by the university. The record is only in the memories of the four people that

changed the coins. I am one of the four and you must memorize what I tell you. Do not record or write it down because the enemy may find it. This should give you a starting point in your search and lead you to the source that is trying to bribe the people in the Great Hall. I could not tell you before because we were afraid the enemy spies could hear and obstruct your search. “

Suddenly Edmund felt energized to start the hunt. He sat up in his chair, interlocked his fingers on the table, and said, “OK. I will try to memorize your information. I am still skeptical about these beings in what you call the Meta-World, but I will play your way for now.” He separated his hands and waved them to emphasize, “It seems rather ridiculous because if they exist, the minute I leave the room they will just read my mind and get what I memorized.”

James quickly grabbed Edmund's left hand and held it tightly with both of his hands causing Edmund to look into his eyes, “They can only read your thoughts if you let them. By repeating the command we used to drive them from this room, you can keep them away from your thoughts. They live in the Meta-World and many of your thoughts exist in that realm. You exist in both the physical and metaphysical worlds. You have the power to block their vision in the physical world and drive them away. Be careful. They are very clever. They convinced my father to listen to them and almost had him in control. Only my mother’s unconditional love could break the hold they had on him.”

Grace seized Edmund’s right arm, causing him to break his eye lock on James. Edmund turned to face her while she proclaimed, “I will always be here when you need someone. We can meet in this room and drive them out so you can have peace of mind. If he can, I’m sure James will join us. From now on, you will never be alone again. We are connected.”

Edmund was a doubtful man, but for some strange reason he could feel the connection with Grace and James. He thought it was only because they had their hands on him, but when they let go it was still there. He remembered when he was on the football team and the coach had just given a speech before the big game. He was a third string player and knew he would never be out on the field, but he felt the tension in every play. Once again, he felt a strong connection with the members of a team seeking the same goal. He replied, "Thank you. I will do my best to solve this problem." He memorized the information, placed his hand on the green control to drop the security, and when the door finally opened, they all left the room.

The past few years had brought many new connections and commitments to the people in the wheel. There were marriages and celebrations of festive times, but also forlorn passings of family and friends. The wedding between Grace and James seemed to spark a fire as nuptials for the twins, Stacey and Martin, and Yolanda and Eugene soon followed. Not long after as the cycle of life continued, Seymour's parents passed and within months, Ruby's parents followed. It was not unusual for elderly couples to pass together from a disease called **Geriatrics**[38]. They were found holding each other and smiling as they journeyed from this world into the next. Everyone knew they had found the path and took it together. The ultimate and final connection.

These years were not just filled with joy and sorrow, there was also fear. Edmund had followed the information he memorized in the secure room and discovered corruption in the Great Hall. The chamber with the symbol of the Daori coin above the door was where the counterfeit coins were originally minted. They were used by the university and converted to general use and then they passed through different stores to a small

company called Speculations Incorporated. This company had been investigated for removing programming and creating counterfeit coins. Spec Inc. also worked with the people in the mint at the Great Hall. These were the same people that had accused Seymour of making the coins for his own use. They were putting together a case against him and trying to shut down the wheel. Edmund feared the worst was yet to come because the enemy was now connecting to people in the hall and using them to fight for unworthy causes. They even asked Edmund to help build a lawsuit against Seymour and put him in jail. He could feel their anger when he refused and heard the bad spirits whisper, "Get rich. Do what they tell you or you will be next on the list. Take some coins and you will be happy. If you don't, they will have you removed from the Great Hall. You will lose your job." He felt fear and immediately left the chamber. He went to the secure room and executed the ritual to remove the spirits before he closed the door. Again, peace came over him, the fear was gone, and he was able to think clearly. He remembered a phrase from a president during the great depression centuries ago. It tugged on his brain like a dog on a chain. **"The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself**[39]." He remembered his father telling him that his ancestor worked with a president long ago and helped to make that saying timeless. He remembered how the fight against the depression was considered to be a war. He knew, beyond any doubt, he was in a war with the enemy James had called the Creature. He may have retreated from the first battle due to fear, but now he would get ready for the next encounter. He knew he needed help.

That night, Edmund contacted Grace and asked her to meet him. She said, "I will meet you in front of the secure room at eight in the morning in two days." He agreed.

Arriving at the room two days later, Edmund was surprised to see not just Grace but James, Seymour, and Ruby as well. He started to say something but Grace put her finger on her lips to keep him quiet and they all entered the room in silence. After the ritual to remove all beings from the Meta-World and the start up security finished, Grace said, “I detected an urgency in your voice and felt it best to get a few others involved. I hope you don’t mind.”

Edmund responded, “I think we will need all the help we can get. The people in the mint are using counterfeit coins to start a war against Seymour.” He turned and faced Seymour as he continued, “I believe they have been turned by what you called the Creature to try and put you in jail or worse. When I would not help them, they threatened me with being bribed by you and cooperating with you. I felt like I had lost a battle and a big war has just begun!”

Edit Chapter 6[40]

CONNECTIONS Physical & Meta-Physical

Chapter 7
THE INVESTIGATION

In the secure room Edmund said he suspected that the leaders in the coin minting chamber were making special purpose Daori and using them to corrupt people in other sections of the Great Hall. Looking directly at Seymour he grumbled, “They told me they had some very powerful people in the Hall already on board and I better not go against their plan. They said if I would testify against you, I would be promoted and paid enough to make myself the leader in my chamber. Then yesterday the banker notified me that a large amount of Daori was placed in my account by an unknown source. He said it was programmed for my testimony in a trial and it could only be released by the judge after I give witness in court. Late last night a man came to my door and told me he would be the judge in the trial against you. He said I needed to make sure you were found guilty or he would proclaim the Daori coins were a bribe from you to get acquitted.”

Seymour interrupted with, “What did you say?”

“He never gave me a chance to reply. He just turned and quickly walk away.” Edmund added, “They know the diamond in the coin came from you. I’m sure they will use that to back their claim. If I defend you in any way, I know they will come after me. I don’t know what to do!”

Seymour felt Ruby grab his hand. He turned to gaze into her beautiful emerald eyes and noticed the smile on her face. Without words, she was telling him to help Edmund overcome his fear. She knew he would know what to do and her smile said proceed. He turned back to Edmund with the same grin and said, “Peace be

with you. Be not afraid. Truth and love cannot be destroyed, they can only be hidden. You have been given the task of exposing the truth. You will do this with agape and humility. Your name will be recorded in the history of the Great Hall as the man that destroyed the invasion of corruption and greed and made this place pure again."

Edmund did not know what to say. He glanced around the table, and everyone was looking at him with beautiful smiles. He finally just blurted out one word, "How?"

James broke the silence with, "I have been working for years on exposing truth and I would like to offer some advice, with your permission."

Edmund responded, "Please do."

"Who is the most trusted person you know that has authority in the Great Hall?" James asked.

Edmund took a moment to think and then answered, "I guess that would be Sibyl. Do you know who she is?"

Everyone grinned and said, "Oh yes!" or "Certainly!" and "I agree."

James continued, "Go to Sibyl and in a very unprotected, public place ask her for permission to investigate the misconduct of someone we thought was honorable. Tell her you were made aware of this by people in the coin mint so you would like to start gathering facts in that chamber. She will probably agree and anyone listening will think you are doing what you were told."

Edmund's interest level peaked when he heard what James had proposed. He was no longer slumped in his chair but sat up straight and asked, "Then what?"

James continued, "Then you will need to go to the mint and tell them you are gathering facts for the

forthcoming trial. You must put in writing all the data against Seymour but memorize how it was gathered and if people were paid to say things that were not true. Record the names of everyone that is against Seymour but memorize the names of anyone in the mint that is not in favor of their plan. It must look like you are working with the people against Seymour while you are really gathering evidence to reveal the truth. Especially learn all you can on how the judge was picked for the trial."

There was a moment of stillness as Edmund digested the comments from James. He ultimately responded with, "They know we are meeting in this secure room and may not believe anything I say."

With a very gentle voice, Seymour spoke. "Always tell the truth. They will probably monitor you to see if you are lying. Never forget humility is more powerful than arrogance. You must stay calm. They will be using **eye-detect**[41] to see if you are telling the truth. Never look down, but look straight into the eyes of the person you are talking to. Tell them you were only supposed to meet with Grace and were surprised when we showed up. Disclose to them you were afraid of being called Seymour's accomplice and did not know what to do. Also add that there will be no more meetings like this until after the trial and all the culprits are in jail. All these things are true and their lie detectors will show them you are not trying to deceive anyone."

James firmly added, "From now on you are on your own. There can be no communication with anyone in this room. Are you sure you want to accept this mission?"

Edmund did not answer immediately. He scanned the people sitting at the table. He noticed that

Seymour was holding Ruby's hand. Grace also held James by the hand. He never found a soulmate and devoted most of his life to protecting the Great Hall. He knew he was truly alone but could feel love coming from everyone at the table. With a strong voice, full of confidence, he declared, "This is not just my mission, it is why I am here. I hope I do not let you down."

Like her father, Grace could sometimes predict the future and she instantly stated, "You won't!"

They decided to make the meeting very short and told Edmund to walk away from them quickly when they were out of the room. The control light turned red, the door opened, and Edmund hustled out into the corridor walking quickly toward the coin mint. The others walked out slowly with dejected looking faces. Because Ruby was an **empath**[42], she could feel the presence of lifeforces gathering around them. She said with a sorrowful voice, "What do we do now?"

Seymour knew what she was doing so he added, "Let's find a place where we can pray."

Grace added, "I know a place. Follow me." They departed in silence to the small chapel in the Great Hall.

Edmund knew that Sibyl would be in the courtyard advising people, so he went there and asked her for permission to investigate the misconduct of someone thought of as honorable. He told her the coin mint made him aware of this and asked for permission to start gathering facts in that chamber. She agreed.

He then went directly to the coin mint and asked a young man at the chamber door if he could meet with the people in charge. He was led into a room with a rectangular table and asked to sit in the middle of the long side near the back wall. He was given a glass of water and told it would take a few minutes but the people he wanted to see would join him soon. Because

he was in security, he had seen rooms like this many times before. They had cameras in the corners of the room aimed directly at him and the chair he was in would all be used to detect lies. It was definitely an interrogation room. He glanced at the glass of water they had given him and wondered if there was any drug in it just as the door opened. Three people entered followed by a **robonaut**[43] that stood by the door and stared into his eyes. He knew that his answers to all questions needed to be the truth or they would know he was trying to deceive them.

The first person to enter the room was a man in his thirties with a mustache and a goatee. He was the person who told Edmund they wanted him to help put Seymour in jail. Sitting directly in front of Edmund, he activated a display that could only be viewed from his side of the table. The second person who entered was the young man that met Edmund at the door and he sat on Mr. mustache's left. He was followed by a young woman that sat on the right. Then the bearded man said, "Nice to see you again. Did you decide to help us put Seymour in jail?"

Edmund stared straight into his eyes and answered, "After I left here, I asked for a meeting with Grace from the Meta-World chamber for her opinion. I thought she might know something because she was very close to Seymour's son. She told me we could meet in two days, and then showed up today with Seymour, his wife, and son. I only wanted to talk to Grace and when I tried to tell her she made a gesture to be silent. She insisted on not talking until they were in a secure room. Once inside, I told them I was afraid of being accused of collaborating with anything they may get charged with. The discussion was cut very short. I left that meeting, got permission to investigate, and

came straight here to find out what you know about Seymour."

All three investigators glanced down at the display Edmund could not see. They did not realize that during his many years of investigating, he had learned to focus on a person's eyes to see what they were looking at. The reflection showed, "TRUTH. Members of meeting left hopeless. Went to chapel to pray. PROCEED."

The bearded man continued, "Good! I think you will find that Seymour has been using coins made in our mint to benefit his sons and other personal ventures. My name is Gered Werop, Director of the mint. The young man on my left is Sile Salef, Head of Mint Security. And the lady on my right is our head lawyer on this case, Megotis Ipred. Where do you want to start?"

"I am Edmund Howe. An investigator from the Great Hall Security chamber. I was told to look into some counterfeit coins found circulating in the hall. If you would permit me, I would like to keep notes of our conversation."

Gered nodded approval and Edmund touched a button on his watch and started talking **shorthand**[44]. Only the robot in the room knew what he was recording. It was translated and sent to the display in front of Gered. It read, "Investigation of Seymour at coin mint on 3BT-?$!"

Megotis instantly probed, "What does 3BT-?$! represent?"

Edmund smiled and looked straight into her eyes as he explained, "It is a double encrypted code linked with my watch that can only be decoded by two external devices and my password. It is necessary to protect people and events recorded in my notes from

being used unlawfully. Even reading my memory electronically to get the password would not work because the external devices would detect the probe and guard the information. In the event of my death, certain key members in the hall would get my notes and could decrypt them with their passwords. Gered, you know about this system, don't you?"

The display in front of Gered read, "Truth," and before he could answer, Megotis continued, "Please tell me what those letters and symbols mean. I do not like private notes!"

Edmund answered, "The 3BT is the date, place, and time of this meeting. The dash signifies names are coming, and the three symbols after the dash are your names and titles."

The display again flashed "Truth" as Gered finally answered, "I did not know about this double encrypted code because I had to replace the former director when she had a mental breakdown. Let's move on and get Seymour put in jail where he belongs."

At that moment, Edmund was made aware of two important facts. They could not read his encrypted notes and Gered was not a sanctioned director of the mint. Because the mint had its own security force, he had never met the former director and asked, "Who was the former director and what caused the breakdown?."

"She's a lady about your age and could not handle the stress of putting Seymour in jail. She is being treated right here at the mint to bring her back but right now she just mumbles crazy stuff and cannot handle the job. Her name is **Elizabeth Van Lew**[45] named after her relative from long ago. Like her namesake she is now known as 'Crazy Bet.' I guess her mental condition is in her DNA." Gered replied.

Edmund made a note and probed deeper, "I

would like to talk with her. There may be something big we can use at the trial that made her go crazy."

Once again, the display indicated "Truth" as Gered answered, "She gets very violent and may attack you. We keep her on a high dose of '**benzos**[46]' every day to keep her under control. I would prefer you stay away for your own safety. She gets very violent when we try to inject her so she has to take her medication orally. In fact, it took us a long time before we found a nurse that she would not throw things at when they entered the room. He is a very old man that she worked with when she was in charge of the mint. I think she recognizes him and feels that he won't hurt her. But she may get violent if you walk into the room."

"OK. Let him go into the room and I will enter right behind him. He can stay while I try and talk to her. You can even have your robot stand by the door to protect me and record the session," Edmund insisted.

Gered glanced at the display and read, "Truth. Reasonable request to gather data." He reluctantly agreed and grumbled, "OK. But don't waste much time on her. We have the trial set for Friday and our judge, prosecutor, and witnesses are all in place. Most of these are not from the Great Hall and we have them living in a restricted area. Seymour got his summons and is defending himself without a lawyer. You are the final nail in his coffin. This should be a slam dunk and the man could be in jail Saturday!"

The meeting ended and Edmund spent the rest of the day gathering information about people who worked in the mint. He could not get anyone to explain why Elizabeth was being treated at the mint and not sent to a health center in the hall. He discovered that the man acting as Elizabeth's nurse was retired and used to be her head of security. He also found a few

people in key positions to program the coins that would not answer any questions. They seemed to be working under tension and in great distress. After leaving the mint, he went to his secure room and made encrypted notes of what he had discovered. He also made notes of what he wanted to ask Elizabeth in the morning. He left the secure room and went directly to his sleeping chamber. Even though his mind was filled with questions and worry, exhaustion overpowered him and slumber came quickly.

The next morning, Edmund woke early, showered, dressed, and scuttled to the mint to follow the old man into Elizabeth's room. They were accompanied by Gered's robot who stood at Edmund's side and would monitor everything. When they entered the room the man said, "Good morning, Liz. Do not be afraid. I have brought someone to see you. The robot is only here to record the meeting. No one will touch you. I will give you your medication after the meeting."

To Edmund's surprise, Liz seemed very calm as she stared at the old man from her chair facing the door and replied, "Who are you?"

"My name is Joseph and I am your nurse. The man behind me is called Edmund and he would like to ask you a few questions. He is from the security center in the Great Hall and just wants to make sure you are safe." Joseph stepped aside to let Edmund get closer.

Edmund took one step forward and froze. She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. When he stared into her dark brown eyes, he felt a connection he never felt before. Most of his adult years he had been alone. He had never met anyone who touched his soul like this before. He could feel her loneliness and suffering. He had heard the expression "love at first sight," and now he knew what it meant. Suddenly Liz

shouted, “I’m dead,” and then started reciting a bunch of gibberish.

Joseph stepped back in front of Edmund to calm her down and asked him to leave the room. Edmund and the robot quickly exited and, in the corridor, he asked the robot to explain what just happened. The reply was, “She thinks she is dead.”

Edmund asked, “But what was all that garble after she said I’m dead?”

The robot replied “Undetermined. Cannot decipher.” Edmund knew what he had to do. He knew that if he was dead only the trusted heads of the Great Hall could decrypt his notes. He needed to get Liz’s message to Sibyl, and hoped she would know what to do next. He left the mint and went straight to the secure room. He recorded all the information in a doubly encrypted format and included Liz’s message. He sent everything to Sibyl and waited for a reply. All he got back was “See you at the trial.”

Edit Chapter 7[47]

Elizabeth

Chapter 8
THE HEARING

On Friday at 10 AM, Edmund went to the coin mint room set aside for the trial. There was a note on the door stating that the trial was moved to the Great Hall Legal Chamber and start time rescheduled to 11:30 AM by order of the Great Hall Managers. He immediately went to see Elizabeth but found both she and Joseph had been removed from the coin mint. No one knew why, but he was told that many others were subpoenaed and at a trial in the legal chamber. He realized Sibyl was now in charge and hurried out of the mint to go to the trial. A large crowd was blocking his path to the door and he had to show his credentials and push his way to the front of the mob. He heard people asking, 'What is this all about?" He recognized hall members from many different chambers by the colors of their badges. Only his credentials got him past security and into the legal chamber. Once inside, he was ushered to a small private room with an image projected on a wall and a chair facing that wall. His escort instructed, "Have a seat and you will be called when it is your turn to testify." The guide left, the door closed, and a green light above the door turned red indicating it was locked. Upon sitting down, Edmund found the armchair very comfortable. There was a small table on the right side of the chair with a polished wooden top. He stared at the picture on the wall and noticed the words below the image read, "Room monitored. Voice requests." Edmund was not hungry but his throat felt dry. There was still a good twenty minutes before the trial was scheduled to start so he said in a loud voice, "I am thirsty. Could I get a limeade with no ice but slightly cool?" A non-gender robotic voice replied, "One minute to fulfill request." After the minute passed the tabletop on his right

slid away from his chair and seemed to fall down and disappear. Another identical top rose from within the table with a glass filled with limeade on it and replaced the original top. Edmund took the glass, tasted the beverage, and said, “It’s delicious. Thank you.”

The voice replied, “You're welcome.”

Edmund returned his attention to the image on the wall. It showed a judge’s bench raised high enough to allow a person to see everyone in the room. A robonaut stood on each side and behind the bench. Although they looked very human, Edmund was sure they were the latest design and equipped with all the cutting-edge technology. There was a large gallery, for **public seating**[48], on the opposite side of the room with people shuffling in to find their places. An invisible barrier above a short wall barred anyone or anything from passing or going over the short wall to the floor area in front of the gallery. It sparkled and beeped whenever anything touched the gallery side surface of the transparent wall. On the floor in front of the gallery there were two rectangular tables, each with three chairs on one side facing the judge’s bench. Between the tables and the judge’s bench were two rows of seven chairs facing the judge. These chairs were surrounded on three sides by a six-foot wall with a sign that read “jury box.” There was no wall in front of these chairs so the people sitting could see an image displayed on the front of the judge’s bench of the two tables behind them, but the people at these tables would not be able to see anyone sitting in the chairs. On the left side of the judge’s bench was the witness box, positioned so everyone in the room could see the person in that chair clearly. Because Edmund had been in security for many years, he had seen this courtroom before, but never from this isolated and fortified area.

The gallery was full and prattle at a maximum

when a section of the far wall opened and the prosecution team entered. Edmund recognized Gered, Megotis, and the man who claimed he would be the judge at the trial. They entered and sat at the table on the left of the gallery. On the opposite side of the room, another section of the wall opened and Seymour and Ruby entered and sat at the table on the right of the gallery. Due to Seymour's popularity, the crowd started to cheer, but a loud voice announced, "Silence! Please stand!"

A section of the wall behind the judge's bench opened and six people wearing different colored robes entered. They marched down a short stairway on the right and disappeared into the jury box. The announcement came, "Monitor of this session is Justice Dayot," as an elderly, silvered hair man, in a red robe entered and sat in the judge's chair. Edmund knew the colored robes represented the seven colors in the rainbow and the seven sections of the world that founded the Great Hall. Everyone knew the decisions made here were even more powerful than those made on the surface in the **World Court**[49]. Dayot announced, "Let it be recorded that this hearing is to determine if the person know as Seymour E. Blox may be guilty of misusing Daori coins made in our mint for personal profit and possibly other crimes against the Great Hall. If there are enough findings to support these claims, then we will proceed with a formal trial. The prosecution may now present their evidence."

Megotis stood and stated, "Because we believe the offender is capable of controlling software and robots with his mind, we demand he not be able to defend himself. We have brought an impartial legal person who is a judge outside of the Great Hall. If the court permits, we would like this individual to be Seymour's **defense lawyer**[50]."

Dayot smiled and controlled his urge to laugh as he proclaimed, "The prosecution would like to pick the

defendant's counsel? I think that would be a first in the history of courtroom procedures. Request denied!"

Megotis asserted, "But his power to control digital software and robots will surely distort many of the facts we wish to present to this hearing. At least put him in a secure box to prevent this and do not let him defend himself!"

The judge's smile vanished as he continued with a serious expression, "Ms. Ipred, Seymour's mind is linked to a chamber in this hall. He never had the power to alter anything, but that link allowed the Great Hall to make the changes he desired. There are people in the gallery behind you that can verify what I just said. Matter of fact, everything is recorded and documented if you need further proof."

With a stunned look she turned and stared at the gallery. She saw many smiles and a few nodding their heads as if to say, "Yes." Turning back to face the bench she muttered softly, "That won't be necessary," and sat down. She knew her whole case had just been destroyed. She also knew anything she presented as a crime would now be against the Great Hall and not just against Seymour. Gered wanted to drop all the charges but she would not agree.

"You may present your findings now," the judge declared, "And Mr. Blox will have the right to explain or refute them."

Gered knew that the people he had paid to lie on the stand would be discovered by eye contact with the robots alongside the judge. His last hope was Edmund. He knew Edmund always told the truth and thought he would support their position. He leaned over close to Megotis and whispered, "Call Edmund."

She stood up and stated, "We would like to call **detective**[51] Edmund Howe from the Great Hall security chamber. He was assigned by the head of his department

to investigate Mr. Blox. We believe he will be able to show this court why Mr. Seymour E. Blox should be in jail!"

An opening on the opposite side of the room from which he entered suddenly appeared and a robot entered and stated, "This way please." Edmund followed the robot into the courtroom to a chair in the witness box and sat down. His body language showed no signs of fear or stress and he smiled at the judge when he took his seat.

The judge pointed at the robonaut behind him on his left, and asserted, "Please look into the eyes of that robot and tell us your full name and profession. In your own words also add that what you say in this courtroom will be the truth."

Edmund turned slightly to his right, stared at the robot and said, "My name is Edmund Howe. I am a senior investigator from the Great Hall security chamber. I swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth to the best of my ability."

Turning back to face the judge, he noticed Dayot was looking at an image on his desk that only he could see. There was only one word shown on that display, "TRUTH." Dayot shifted slightly in his chair, straightened his bright red gown, glanced down at Megotis and decreed, "You may proceed."

Edmund turned slightly to his left to face Megotis as she announced, "Please Mr. Howe, keep your answers brief and do not **elaborate**[52]. Most of my questions can be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no." After a slight pause she continued, "Is it true that you came to the coin mint to investigate counterfeit coins?"

Edmund replied, "Yes."

She continued, "Is it not also true that you were told by the director of the mint that we knew Seymour E. Blox was responsible for the forgery."

"Yes," was Edmund's response.

“During your investigation did you find anything to disprove this statement?” she added as her confidence level rose.

Edmund simply answered with, “No.”

Megotis felt that she was going to win this case as her confidence level peaked. She raised her voice and almost shouted as she declared, “Is it not also true that during your investigation you found the diamond content of the forged coins came from Seymour E. Blox!” Turning she pointed at Seymour and emphasized with, “The man sitting in that chair, right there, in this courtroom!”

Edmund remained calm and simply answered, “Yes.”

Megotis slammed the fist of her right hand into the palm of her open left hand and shouted, “And is not also true that you set a meeting to talk to someone from the Meta-World chamber and were surprised when a large amount was deposited in your account before that meeting took place. Then when the meeting was about to begin Seymour also showed up and attended without your knowledge or approval!”

Edmund showed no signs of emotion as once again he simply answered, “Yes.”

Turning to face the judge she concluded with, “There is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Seymour E. Blox tried to bribe this witness and is guilty of forgery and many other crimes. I’m done with this witness.” She turned, walked back to her table and sat down. Gered patted her hand and whispered, “Good job.”

The judge however was staring at his display because when she made her last statement the “eye-detect” robot behind the judge scanned her and sent a message to the judge that read “Totally False.” There was a murmur in the gallery as people discussed what had just happened. Banging his gavel on the amplifier block

created a very loud crashing sound and produced silence Dayot glanced at Seymour and asked, “Would you like to cross examine the witness?”

Seymour answered as he stood and walked closer to the witness box, “Yes, Your Honor.” Standing in front of the bench, Seymour asked, “Since I will not require just simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers, could I have your ‘eye-detect’ robot stand behind me and observe this witness?”

Instantly Megotis jumped to her feet and shouted, “I object! He is trying to make my witness look like a liar!”

The judge shouted, “Ms. Ipred, you will sit down and remain quiet. This is a hearing not a trial. You only allowed the witness to answer yes or no to your questions. There was no need to use eye-detect to determine the truth of his answer. Mr. Blox, however, wants this witness to elaborate freely on his answers. Eye-detect is a reasonable request for this type of examination. Besides, I am the only one that will see the results of the test.” He then turned to face the robot and said, “Stand behind Mr. Blox and determine the truth in the answers given to questions the witness is required to answer.”

When the eye-detect android was in place Seymour proceeded, “Mr. Howe will you describe in your own words what you discovered at the coin mint.”

Edmund sat up straight in his chair and stared at Seymour as he testified. “The most important thing I discovered was the former director of the mint, a Ms. Elizabeth Van Lew, had been replaced and was under **sedation**[53] and held in a secure isolation room. I asked key people in the coin making crew about this but everyone seemed afraid to talk. The acting director, Mr. Gered Werop, claimed she got violent and went crazy when they told her about Mr. Blox’s crimes.”

The judge glanced at his display panel that showed

“Truth.”

Seymour enquired, “Did you get a chance to visit Ms. Van Lew?”

Edmund simply replied, “Yes.”

Seymour continued, “Please tell me in your own words what you saw and what you felt about Ms. Van Lew’s condition.”

Edmund stared at the eye detecting robot behind Seymour and without even one blink or movement of his eyes declared, “I saw a woman about my age sitting in a chair that was turned around with her arms resting on the back of the chair and her chin resting on her arms. When I looked deeply into her eyes, I saw suffering and fear. I also felt a connection because I know what it is like to feel isolated and alone. Suddenly she spoke in a strong voice and said, ‘I am dead.’ She then repeated, over and over, a sequence of letters, numbers, and the names of well-known symbols that seemed to make no sense at all.

When we left her room, the android guard they sent to protect me stated, ‘She thinks she is dead.’ When I asked what she said after her I-am-dead statement, the robot proclaimed, ‘Cannot be deciphered.’ Because of my history in security, I realized that if she were dead, and the head of a chamber, her doubly encrypted personal diary would be opened by the directors of the Great Hall. I believed the message she repeated over and over was for these directors, but I was not sure. I turned everything over to Sibyl.” Edmund finally looked down at his interlocked fingers in his lap and tried to relax.

The judge was staring at the number of times his display had printed “True” and could not find even one false or question mark. He turned to face Seymour and declared, “You may continue if you have more questions.”

Seymour turned back to face Edmund and requested, “Mr. Howe, would you tell us, in your own

words, everything you know about the coins that were deposited in your account recently."

Edmund paused, then looked straight ahead to allow eye-detection testing and stated, "The morning before we met, I was told by Gered Werop that some very powerful people in the hall were helping put Mr. Blox in jail. He said if I cooperated, I would be promoted and paid enough to make myself the leader in my chamber. That same morning my banker notified me that a large amount of Daori was placed in my account by an unknown source. He said it was programmed for my testimony in a trial and it could only be released by the judge after I give witness in court. Late that night a man came to my door and told me he would be the judge in the trial against you. He said I needed to make sure you were found guilty or he would proclaim the Daori coins were a bribe from you to get **acquitted**[54]. He then turned and quickly walked away."

Seymour did not show any anger as he calmly asked, "Did you get this man's name?"

Edmund replied, "No. But he is sitting at that table right next to Gered. The man Ms. Ipred wanted to make your lawyer."

Instantly shouts came from different sections of the gallery. "Put them on trial!" "This is a joke, Seymour is innocent!" "Arrest those people, they are the guilty ones!" The invisible wall sparkled as it blocked objects thrown at the prosecutor's table. Gered said something to Megotis and she stood with her hand in the air, facing the judge. The judge slammed his gavel twice on the amplifier block to produce a deafening crash and shouted, "Quiet. Quiet. I will have silence in this courtroom or I will clear the gallery!" It took a few seconds but the people finally sat down and were silent. Judge Dayot took a long look at his display then looked up at Megotis and said, "Ms. Ipred, do you want to make

a statement?"

"Yes, Your Honor. You have just seen the power of Mr. Blox. Everything you view on your desk monitor is controlled by Mr. Blox. That is why he wanted the robot to do the eye-detect on the witness. He controls everything you see. He even has control over these people in the gallery. You are making the same mistake that got him free years ago when REED had him on trial for destroying the environment."

Dayot started to look down when Megotis declared in a strong voice, "Whatever you read it is what Mr. Blox wants you to see. I tell you he can control everything!"

He stared at Megotis and stated, "If that were true, but I do not believe it is, then how do you propose anyone could put Mr. Blox on trial?"

She continued, "He must be locked in an isolation room and not allowed to see or hear anything. A normal person who is not under his control must act as his defense and must have no contact with him until after the trial is over. This is why we wanted Judge Trocrup from outside the Great Hall to be his judge or at least his defense counsel."

Dayot glared at Megotis as he firmly declared, "You cannot take away Mr. Blox's right to a fair …."

Seymour interrupted by looking at the judge, raising his hand, and softly but firmly said, "Your Honor, I would like to prove beyond any doubt that my past and present actions have only been to promote unconditional love for everyone. I must also show people that are trying to stop me that I wish them the best path to follow before they enter the Meta-World. I am willing to submit to being isolated as long as my wife is with me. I will even let Ms. Ipred's own witness, Edmund Howe, be my defense spokesman, as long as he is given full control to investigate and pick his own assistant."

A murmur of disapproval started growing in the gallery when the judge slammed his gavel for silence and queried, “Are you sure about this?”

“Yes. Total isolation, and her man as my defense lawyer is exactly what she demanded,” Seymour replied.

The judge turned to face Edmund still sitting in the witness box and enquired, “Mr. Howe would you accept this request?”

Edmund replied, “Only if I am given the authority to investigate every person, no matter how important they are, and every chamber in the Great Hall, no matter how secure it is. This would include even you, Your Honor!”

This unexpected reply created an even larger murmur from the gallery that took two slams of the gavel to produce silence. Dayot finally turned to face Megotis and asked, “Do you accept these conditions, Ms. Ipred?”

She replied, “Only if the verdict and sentence is unreversible and there can be no **appeal**[55].”

Judge Dayot thought for a moment then pronounced his decision, “OK! But I do not want Mr. Blox isolated from the world more than ten days. Mr. Howe you will only have six days to complete your investigation. The trial will start one week from today and I expect jury to deliver a verdict within four days.” Looking at Edmund he continued, “For the sake of swiftness, do you have an associate I can appoint now to be your co-counsel?”

“Yes, Your Honor. A woman about my age who has a law degree and was the director of a chamber in the Great Hall. Her name is Elizabeth Van Lew.”

“What!” Megotis shouted, “You can’t use her! The woman is crazy and thinks she is dead!”

The judge created the loud crash sound as once again he struck the amplifier block with his gavel and with a smile that covered his entire face he calmly proclaimed, “I would think that is exactly the kind of

defense you would want, Ms. Ipred. Therefore, let the trial begin one week from today at 10AM in this courtroom. Mr. Blox will be isolated in two hours with his wife. Mr. Howe and Ms. Van Lew will present Mr. Blox's defense. The jury will be the six officials in the jury box. If the jury and I agree on a verdict and any sentence that must be applied it will be binding and irreversible. This hearing is concluded." He gently touched the gavel to the amplifier and produced the sound of a door closing and a lock clicking into place. The judge in the red robe rose and left the room.

Edit Chapter 8[56]

THE LAST SLAM

Chapter 9
THE TRIAL

After the other six members of the rainbow jury had safely exited the courtroom, the doors on both sides of the main floor slid open. Gered's crew quickly exited and left Seymour, Ruby, and Edmund on the main floor with the two robots and a full gallery. The prattle from the crowd was praising Seymour but booing Edmund. Seymour looked at Edmund and suggested, "You better go back to your secure room before they turn off the barrier wall." Edmund agreed and one of the androids escorted him back to the room from which he came. When he entered and the door closed behind him, he noticed Sybil was sitting on a chair with a drink in her hand. They were alone because the robot had gone back to the courtroom. Her smile was like a cool soft breeze on a hot summer day and she pointed at a chair facing her and said, "Sit, dear Edmund. We have something very important to discuss."

When he sat, she offered him the drink she was holding and continued, "This is the same thing you ordered before the hearing. I hope you like it."

He took a sip then softly proclaimed, "Thank you. I really needed that."

Sybil leaned back in her chair, put her interlocked fingers in her lap, and continued, "After you gave me the message from Elizabeth, I went straight to the directors and had it decrypted. It read, 'Great Hall corrupted. Help. Trust Howe.'"

"What? Did she really say trust me? I only met her for less than five minutes! Why would she say something like that?"

Sybil leaned forward, looked straight into Edmund's eyes, and probed, "Why did you want her for

your assistant if you only knew her for a few minutes."

Edmund put his drink on the table next to his chair. He slowly leaned forward and put his hands out with the palms up. Sybil grasped each hand and made penetrating eye contact. Edmund whispered, "When I looked into her eyes, I could see her very soul! No words were necessary. I knew this was the person I needed in my life. I fell in love."

Sybil let go of his hands, fell back into her chair, and with eyes that twinkled, answered back, "And maybe she did too!"

"Do you really think she could? She was the director of the mint, and the most beautiful person both outside and inside. Do you really think she could love a boring investigator like me?"

Sybil tilted her head to look up and past Edmund as she tenderly whispered, "Why don't you ask her."

Edmund turned to see what was behind him and his life changed forever. Elizabeth was standing in a golden silk **peplos**[57] dress with her arms outstretched. She looked like a Greek goddess beckoning and no words were needed. He quickly jumped to his feet, ran to hold her in an embrace that fused their bodies and souls into one entity. She whispered into his ear, "We are joined, forever." Then she leaned back, and they shared a passionate kiss to seal the bond.

Suddenly Edmund grasped both her hands, took a step back, gazed into her eyes and asked, "Are you alright? Those drugs they were giving you."

Elizabeth grimaced and interrupted, "I am dead!" and added the same gibberish as before. He looked into her eyes and knew she was telling him to be quiet.

Sybil stood and proclaimed, "It is time for Elizabeth to rest. She may never be the person who ran the mint again, but she needs to be calm and take a break. She is under my care now and has been sleeping in my

quarters down the hall. I suggest we go there now and let her relax. You may come with Edmund, and we can all have something to eat for lunch."

Edmund took Elizabeth's hand and followed Sybil through the door and down a corridor to a very old section of the Great Hall. The passageway ended at what appeared to be a solid wall of granite. When Sybil turned to face the hallway they had just walked through, her appearance changed drastically. Her skin darkened, she looked years younger, she seemed taller and raised her hands as she declared in Greek, "**Βγείτε δαίμονες**[58]," which means "go out demons." Edmund noticed the stale air at that dead end changed and now felt fresh and sweet. Sybil turned back to the granite wall, touched it with her hand to make an opening appear. They followed her into the room and the opening became a granite wall again. Sybil's appearance changed back to the look of a caring grandmother when she faced Edmund and softly said, "Now you may ask your questions. They were watching us in that room through cameras and demons."

Before Edmund could speak, Elizabeth excitingly proclaimed, "They were trying to give me drugs, but Joseph worked with me to trick them into believing I was drugged. I would go completely crazy if anyone else tried to inject me, but I let Joseph take their needles and perform the injections. You would be surprised at the sleight of hand magic my old friend can do with hypodermic needles and pills. Joseph never gave me anything more than saline solution and sugar pills. In fact, Joseph has been my contact with the world outside that room for some time now. He was under constant surveillance so he could only talk to a few of the workers in the mint. You became my first courier that could reach the directors and warn them of the corruption in the Great Hall."

Edmund was surprised at the difference in the

energy she displayed but he humbly asked, “Where is Joseph now?”

“After Sybil took me into her custody, they dropped the shadowing on Joseph so he is now gathering information about the counterfeit coins that we can use in the trial. When Gered seized control of the mint, he was using a company outside of the Great Hall called Speculations Incorporated. They are better known as Spec Inc. They blocked the history by stopping the program in the coins and created a fake one on paper to make it look like Seymour is guilty of all kinds of crimes. What they do not know is that each coin still has the history stored up until the clock was stopped. The forged history in writing will mean nothing in a real courtroom. Joseph told me that once we get the program running again, the real history will be available.”

Sybil interrupted with, “Slow down, Liz! I have never seen you this excited. I think you just spoke more words in the last two minutes then you have said in the past two years.”

“I can’t help it! I have never been this excited before in my entire life. We are going to catch those evil doers and teach them not to mess with Edmund and Elizabeth. We need a slogan. How about ‘Led by Ed and His Liz.’?” She hugged Edmund, kissed him, sat down on a couch, and started drawing on an electronic note pad on the table in front of the couch.

Edmund removed his courtroom jacket and sat next to Liz. She had already drawn five different rectangles and had lines with arrows connecting them. They were numbered and had titles with short descriptions below the headings. He quickly realized it was a flow chart for the trial. He also recognized that she was a brilliant strategist. She was planning every step of the trial coming soon. He leaned up next to her, put his arm around her waist, and said, “How about ‘Led by Liz and read by Ed’ for a

motto."

The week passed quickly, and it was time for the trial to begin. The prosecution table had discussed the fact that Elizabeth still looked senseless and Edmund had not once gone to the mint to question anyone. They felt confident and were convinced they could put Seymour away for good. Edmund and Liz showed no expression at all but just sat waiting for the trial to begin. The door behind the bench opened and three women in different colored robes entered followed by three men in other colored robes. They stood in front of their seats in the jury box as the android by the door announced, "Please rise for the Honorable Justice Dayot." and the red robed judge entered, completing the seven colors of the rainbow. He took his place behind the judge's desk and sat down. The door behind him closed as he spoke, "Please sit." When the room had plunged into total silence, he proclaimed, "Members of the jury, your duty today will be to determine whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty based only on facts and evidence provided in this case. The prosecution must prove that the crimes were committed and that the defendant is the person who committed the crimes. Should new evidence show others committed the crimes in question, they will be put on trial in this court as quickly as possible and be subject to the same penalty proposed for the accused, without appeal. All testimony will be recorded, time stamped, and nothing will be removed, but I reserve the right to instruct the jury as we proceed. This trial in the Rainbow Court of the Great Hall is now underway. Prosecution may now deliver their opening statement."

Megotis stood and walked to the front of her table. She turned to face the completely full gallery and cameras that allowed the jury to see her as she declared, "Let it be known that we will show beyond any doubt that the person known as Seymour E. Blox is guilty of using

counterfeit currency to commit crimes against this planet only for his own pleasure and profit. We will also prove that the defendant had to be isolated and removed from these proceedings due to his great power to control digital media and even the minds of organic creatures, such as dogs and even humans. Because of this tremendous power to control everything, we need to never let Mr. Blox out of the secure room where he is now being held. Instead, we must cut off his oxygen supply and quickly insert a deadly gas to eliminate this threat to the universe we live in."

There was an instant roar of disagreement from the gallery. The judge had to bang his gavel twice, and hard against the amplifier pad to be heard above the outburst. Still, the gallery would not be silent. Judge Dayot pressed an area of his desk with his thumb and the invisible barrier wall between the gallery and the main floor became solid and shut out the noise. The gallery could no longer see or hear anything from the main floor. The jury and the judge, however, could still see everything. Both of the androids moved forward and had their lasers pointing at all the entrances from the gallery. Although this was a standard procedure when the wall secured the main floor, it had the appearance of a possible attack coming.

Megotis unexpectedly felt a pronounced fear. She meekly stated, "I have nothing else to say."

Dayot smiled and said, "Good! Please sit back down." He checked the gallery and found it quiet and people were settling down. He placed his hand over a blinking red area of his desk and the wall became transparent again with audio restored. "Another outburst like that and I will clear the gallery and impose everyone in the gallery with a fine and six hours in lockup!" It was so quiet you could hear a feather hit the floor. He continued, "The prosecutions opening comments are

over. Would the defense proceed with their opening statement?"

Edmund stood, but did not walk around the table. He took Elizabeth's hand and made her stand close and they both turned to face the gallery. He put his arm in her arm, and they looked like a couple taking wedding vows. They both smiled as Edmund humbly spoke. "We do not want any of you to suffer because of what might be said in this trial. Please do not let anger or hate control your emotions. These are the tools of those who do not know agape. We want you to see how unconditional love and truth is more powerful than anything else in this universe. That is all we want to say." Elizabeth had not known what Edmund's opening statement would be because they had never prepared one, but the look on Elizabeth's face said it all. The entire gallery got its first taste of agape. They both turned and sat back at the table.

It took the judge a moment to digest such a powerful opening. After a long pause he continued, "The prosecution may now present their evidence or call their first witness."

Megotis stood and announced, "I would like to call Doctor Margorp from Speculations Incorporated." The side door opened and a silver-haired lady, dressed in a blue suit and wearing dark sunglasses entered and took the witness chair.

Judge Dayot requested, "Please remove your glasses, turn towards me, and state your name and profession."

Margorp replied, "I invoke the universal right to deny taking the eye exam by your android because I believe it may damage my optical system and therefore refuse to remove these protective glasses. My name is Doctor Laret Margorp. I received my Degree from the University of Area One in **Molecular Programming**[59]."

Justice Dayot instructed, "Since there is no eye-

detect being performed, the members of the jury must base the validity of this witness's testimony as true, only if it can be backed by other evidence." He then turned to face Megotis and declared, "You may proceed."

She arose, walked over to face her witness, and instructed, "I will keep my questions simple so you will only have to answer yes or no unless otherwise instructed. Doctor Margorp, Is it true that you are the senior director in the programing of Daori coins at Speculations Incorporated? And is it also true that you have been involved in this process for over twenty years?"

"Yes."

"Did you recently discover that certain coins were made and used by a Seymour E Blox to benefit his children and control the research being done at the university where they worked.?"

"Yes."

"When I told you about the power that Mr. Blox has over people you were afraid to come and testify because you or your family could be hurt. Is that true?"

"Yes."

"Did the history in many of these coins also show that they were recently and anonymously deposited in an account for Edmund Howe, a previous witness against Mr. Blox, but is now his defense counsel?"

"Yes."

"Were you at the coin mint in the Great Hall helping program coins when Elizabeth Van Lew was the director and was told that Seymour E. Blox was using these coins for his own personal gain?"

"Yes."

"Did you witness Ms. Van Lew's mental breakdown and violent reaction to this information?"

"Yes."

"To the best of your knowledge and with your

years of experience, is there any way the history in the Daori coins that support these facts can be blocked, erased, changed, or altered?"

"Yes."

"And if they were altered, would the word counterfeit appear when the coins were deposited in a bank or used on the open market?"

"Yes."

"Would the origin of the main diamond material still be traceable even in a counterfeit coin?"

"Yes."

"When you examined some of the coins being used to corrupt people in the Great Hall, were they counterfeit but with an origin of diamond coming from the defendant, Seymour E. Blox?"

"Yes."

"Thank you. I believe we have heard enough to put Mr. Blox into a coma to keep him out of harming you for your cooperation in this trial. As soon as he is powerless, you will be able to relax." She turned to glare at Edmund and angerly declared, "Your witness." She then proceeded to return to the table next to Gered. He tapped her hand and whispered, "Good job."

Edmund rose slowly and walked over to face Doctor Margorp. He had a loving look on his face as he stated, "They showed me your picture when I was told you would be their witness, and I could not help but be impressed by your beautiful blue eyes and your shiny silver hair. It's a shame that you need to hide those eyes behind the dark glasses, but I totally understand and agree with your reason. I will never ask you to take them off. I notice, however, that you are very tense and tightly clutching the arms of the chair. I do not want you to be under stress during my questions, so would you tell me what would make you more comfortable right now?"

Megotis stood and shouted, "Could we have a

question sometime in the near future that pertains to this trial?"

Judge Dayot quickly stood up, banged his gavel so hard that the whole courtroom shook, and shouted, "I warned you about interrupting the defense during this trial! Now you are going to spend a few days in jail and pay the maximum fine I can impose!" The judge noticed Edmund looking at him with both hands up like he needed to say something. So Dayot paused and looking back at Edmund asked, "Do you want to say something?"

Edmund very humbly proclaimed, "I know what it is like to be under the control of false concepts and influenced by wrong ideas. Please let Ms. Ipred stay and forgive her this one time. I'm sure she will not interrupt again."

"All right. But one more outburst from you, little lady, and I will make you sorry you know me!" The judge sat down and looking at Edmund said, "Please proceed."

Edmund turned back to face Doctor Margorp and repeated, "Would you tell me what would make you more relaxed right now? I do not want you to be afraid to tell us the truth. What would it take to get rid of your fear?"

She replied, "I would like to know that my son, his wife, and my grandchildren are safe and cannot be harmed due to anything I say."

Edmund turned to face Liz then the gallery as he smiled and proclaimed, "I should have known. A mother's love for her offspring is as close to agape as you can get. It is unconditional love and she will suffer tremendous pain to protect them. I am a man and can never be a mother, but I have felt my mother's love for me and know how powerful it can be." He turned back to face the witness and gently continued, "You have just seen the control this court has over the prosecution, and you know that Mr. Blox is locked up and cannot hear anything in this trial. If we gathered your son, wife, and

grandchildren and put them under android protection in a room near you, would you be able to relax a little?"

"I think it would help."

"Your Honor, In anticipation of someone using Doctor Margorp's family to make her follow their orders, we have her descendants in Witness Room Three. I would like to take a fifteen-minute break to let her visit them and quiz the two androids protecting them. We could then resume our questions with a witness that has less fear for her family."

Megotis quickly stood but one look at the judge's glare with his gavel raised kept her quiet. She sat back down. Dayot declared, "This court will take a fifteen-minute break and then resume." He gently tapped the pad and the sound of a door closing and a lock clicking into place could be heard.

Edmund went back to his table, sat down next to Liz, took her hand and whispered, "You were right. They were going to use her unconditional love of her family to try and control her. I could see the fear in her hands and hear it in her voice. I hope this will help her find some peace in what she must do next."

Edit Chapter 9[60]

Doctor Margorp's Family

Chapter 10
THE VERDICT

The break was over and everyone was back in the courtroom. Judge Dayot resumed the trial by announcing, "Trial is back in session. Will the defense please continue."

Edmund rose, walked over to face the witness, and asked, "Are you satisfied that your family is safe?"

"Yes."

"I noticed that you are no longer clutching the chair, but you still have the dark glasses. I want to make you as comfortable as possible. I realize you do not know me, but I was told that you did work with Elizabeth Van Lew. Would you be more at ease if she interviewed you now?"

"Yes, I would. I thought that she had a mental breakdown. I was there when they had to drag her away screaming and shouting. Is she capable of asking defense questions for Mr. Blox?"

Edmund replied, "I will let you be the one to determine the answer to that question." He walked over, sat down next to Liz, patted her on the hand, and said, "Your turn."

She rose from her chair with an enormous smile on her face, making her appear to be the village idiot with no idea of where she was going. Gered whispered to Megotis, "This is going to be a joke." Liz heard the comment as she turned and went to face the witness. She calmly stated, "Hello Doctor Laret. I'm still your good friend, Lizzy Lew. It has been years since our last meeting, but I remember it well. You even told me a joke that last time we met. You said, 'What do you get when you meet an egotistical chemist?' and then gave me the answer, 'A bad reaction!.'" Liz then turned to face Gered

and Megotis with their mouths open in shock proclaiming, “There’s your joke!”

Edmund smiled, the judge giggled, and the gallery filled with laughter. The witness leaned forward in her chair and joyfully queried, “They did not harm you?”

“Oh! They tried. Joseph, however, protected me and cleverly led them to believe they had destroyed my memory. I had to do some crazy acting and take some drugs that made me sleep, but I assure you my memory is perfect.”

Tears of joy were running out from behind the dark glasses as she removed them and asserted, “I want the eye-exam to take place while I answer these questions. I want everyone to know I am telling the truth. I really thought they had destroyed Elizabeth’s mind. After what she has been through to save the Great Hall from destruction, I can no longer remain silent.”

The judge glared down at the prosecution table with his gavel ready, but they only shut their mouths and wrote notes to each other. They knew if they said one word, he was ready to slam that gavel and throw them in jail. The eye-detect android took his place behind Liz and she proceeded, “Doctor Margorp, in all your years of working with Spec. Inc. or the mint in the Great Hall have you ever experienced this control by Seymour Blox that the prosecution claims he possesses?”

“Never.”

“Will you explain, in your own words, how the history in a Daori coin is blocked to make it counterfeit.”

“Long ago we would use chips of silicon that were very pure to make electronic circuits. Eventually we discovered that very pure carbon with the proper crystal structure could also be used because they have a similar atomic configuration. They both have similar **valence**[61] properties. The difference, however, is that carbon requires very high pressure and temperature to form the

right crystal structure that can contain an electronic circuit and memory. The history of the coin is stored in the memory portion of this electronic circuit." She paused for a moment then asked for a drink of water because her throat was dry. The judge nodded to a robot that brought a glass of water to the Doctor. The image on the judge's desk had a long list of true statements and not one question mark or false indication. Doctor Margorp took a couple of sips of water and placed the glass on a narrow table next to her chair. She continued, "The name Daori stands for the elements in the coin, namely diamond, astatine, osmium, rhodium, and iridium. **Astatine**[62] normally has a very short half-life, but when combined with **osmium**[63], the densest element known, the half-life is greatly extended. Each atom that decays provides a pulse that is used as the clock to run the electronic circuit in the coin. By heating the coin and placing it in a stream of protons, the astatine can be destroyed and the clock will stop. When the coin is checked it will read as counterfeit because the electronic circuit has stopped. The program and the coins history to that point in time will still be undamaged."

Elizabeth smiled and commented, "It feels like old times when we worked together on these coins. We sure had fun coming up with crazy ways to make the Daori the safest coin in the universe. Tell me, Doc, is there any way to start the program running again and see the history?"

The doctor laughed and merrily stated, "You should know because you invented it. I will tell the jury, however, so they will know how it is done. You put on a special glove that provides a secret fingerprint and an electronic pulse to replace the stopped clock. The program will recognize the print and dump the history back into a memory built into the glove. We hoped it would help us catch the people making the counterfeit coins. We nicknamed the glove the 'Catcher's mitt' if I

remember correctly."

Liz interjected, "Oh yes, I remember! That was just about the time when Gered interrupted our work and said we had to concentrate all our efforts on putting Mr. Blox in jail. When I refused, well you know what happened. Let's talk about something else for a minute. The prosecution asked you that when you examined the coins being used to corrupt people in the Great Hall, if some of the coins were counterfeit and you answered, 'Yes.' She then asked you to verify that the origin of diamond in those coins came from the defendant, Seymour E. Blox, and you answered, 'Yes.' Now we all know that counterfeit only means the program in the coin is not running. Would you explain for the jury how you knew the origin of diamond came from Mr. Blox."

"That is very simple. All diamond material is inspected, recorded for purity, and marked with a lot number showing the source. I was visiting the mint when everyone was celebrating a donation of a very large amount of the purest diamond ever seen. But they were more excited because the donor was Seymour E. Blox. They were told by the organization, Regulators Ending Environmental Destruction, better known as REED, that Mr. Blox had been executed trying to escape on a ship. I remember how everyone was more excited to hear he was alive then they were in getting the pure diamond."

"One last question, Doctor. Does the source of the diamond have any control on how the Daori coin is made or what is in the coin's program?"

"No."

Liz finished with, "Thank you, Doctor." She turned and went back to sit next to Edmund.

Judge Dayot enquired, "Does the prosecution wish to cross this witness again?"

Megotis replied, "Yes, Your Honor." She rose and walked over to face the doctor as she probed, "Were you

present in the mint when all the coins were made using the diamond donated by Mr. Blox?"

"No."

"So, you really do not know if Mr. Blox, the source of the diamond, was controlling everything that was being done, do you."

"No."

"We know from your own testimony that Seymour E. Blox made REED think he was dead and he donated the diamond to the mint in the Great Hall. We are done with this witness." Megotis returned to her chair.

Dayot looked at Edmund and enquired, "Does the defense wish to cross the witness again?"

Edmund replied, "No, Your Honor."

The judge looked at Doctor Margorp and proclaimed, "You are excused and may return to be with your family. Thank you for allowing the eye-exam during your return." After she left the courtroom, he glanced at his desktop, looked up to face the jury, and proclaimed, "The eye-exam shows Doctor Margorp's testimony was one-hundred percent truthful therefore her answers need not be verified by additional facts." He then turned his attention to the prosecution and sternly stated, "You may call your next witness."

Megotis stood and walked halfway towards the judge's desk. With a heated voice, and a scowl she cried, "I don't know how he is doing it, but you can plainly see that Mr. Blox took control of my best witness. He will probably take control of every witness and the entire jury!" She glared and pointed a shaking finger at the judge screaming, "As far as I know he even has you under his control. This is going to be even worse than the REED fiasco!"

Dayot clenched his teeth and his whole face was bright red. The veins in his forehead were about to explode as he quickly stood and raised his gavel. He was

going to slam it hard on the pad and send Megotis to jail but a loud shout from Edmund made him freeze.

"Your Honor, STOP! Please STOP! Do not let anger take control of this trial. Please, let me clear up a few things first."

Megotis turned and noticed Edmund with both hands in the air and a pleading facial expression staring at the judge. Edmund turned to look Megotis in the eyes and lovingly appealed, "Meggie dear, please sit down. I have only one witness to call. Then you can make your summary statement." The only one to ever call her Meggie was her loving grandmother—the one person who had given her unconditional love. Suddenly she was conflicted. She turned and struggled to walk back to her table. It looked like she was injured and walking in pain. She collapsed into her chair with a dazed appearance, stared forward, and was quiet.

The judge slowly lowered his gavel, placed it on the desk, and sat down. He took a cloth from his pocket and wiped the sweat from his face. There was something in the way that Edmund pleaded that drove the anger out and put him at peace. He smiled at Edmund and said, "You may call your witness."

Still standing, Edmund decreed, "I call Oma Philalethes as my final witness." After a short pause, the door by the witness chair slid open and an elderly lady with a beautiful smile and silvery hair slowly walked over to the chair by the judge and sat down. Without being asked she turned to face the eye-detect android and stated, "My name is Oma Philalethes. I have been the director of the chamber known as Satellite and Communications for the past twenty-two years. I promise that what I say here will be the truth to the best of my knowledge." She made a very small turn to face the judge and continued, "Hello Judge Dayot, nice to see you again."

Dayot responded, “Hello Oma.” They both turned to face Edmund and the judge added, “You may proceed.”

Edmund approached Oma and with a gentle tone requested, “Director Philalethes, I apologize in advance for what I am about to ask but, due to the accusations from the prosecution, would you be willing to take the eye-exam during your testimony?”

The witness giggled slightly and responded, “Please just call me Oma. You’re telling me the position of the prosecutor is that a little bit of trust is all right, but none whatsoever is even better.” The judge giggled and a few laughs could be heard in the gallery. She continued, “I am not offended. You may use your test during my statements.”

The android moved behind Edmund to watch Oma’s eyes as Edmund continued. “Oma, please tell us when you first met Seymour E. Blox.”

“The day he was born.”

Nobody expected that answer, not even Edmund. The judge looked up from reading the exam response and mumbled, “True.” Megotis stiffened in her chair. It was so silent in the room, Edmund felt like he had just gone deaf. He stared at Oma and continued, “Please explain that answer in as much detail as possible.”

“I was very young and working as a research assistant in the communications chamber of the Great Hall. We had identified a DNA configuration that appeared in the blood of people with high telepathy abilities. I was given the task of getting stem cells from **umbilical cord blood**[64]. We would then use these cells to reproduce the telepathic blood cells for our experiments. Mr. and Mrs. Blox had a natural birth for Seymour E. Blox on their farm and I was there when he was born. They were poor people and had agreed to sell us the umbilical cord. Because natural births were so rare,

I wanted to be there and see the event. “

A few moments passed and then Edmund probed for more. “Did you find anything interesting in Seymour’s umbilical cord?”

“Oh, yes! We sure did! Seymour was the only child who had the telepathic DNA sequences already in his cord blood. And most surprisingly, we discovered that his stem cells were already linked to the telepathic molecule. They were generating new ones faster than we had ever seen in the lab. Our first experiment was to put them in the organic part of four biometric android brains. At first, we thought it did nothing, but a few years later these robots could communicate telepathically. We also discovered that they had a very strong connection to Seymour’s brain. By the time he reached sixteen, we were able to ‘read his mind’ so to speak.”

Edmund exclaimed, “Fascinating! Please tell us more about this connection and Seymour’s history.”

“Perhaps I should side-track here and explain a little about my life during this time period. My name, Oma, originates from Arabic and means ‘Giver of Life.’ True to my name, I married and gave birth to four children. During Seymour’s youth, most of my time was spent with my husband and children. I do remember, however, the development of the Tri-Blade remote controlled crisis helicopter by individuals in the Hall. They wanted to use it to prevent disasters but needed it to look like somebody was controlling it. Because of our connection with Seymour, he was the perfect candidate. So, they put it near his farm for him to find. He learned to use it to propel his boat and later the power source for a helicopter. He never questioned where the power came from that made it run. He just nick-named it TB, and let it control his adventures.”

Edmund was perplexed and immediately declared, “You mean to tell me that all those stories about Seymour

are really about the Tri-Blade? The saving of the stag? The saving of the ship in the Bermuda Triangle? Saving the diamond market? Saving the baby dolphin? And even the REED trial, were not controlled by Seymour but by people in the Great Hall!."

"Yes, Mr. Howe, that is exactly what I am telling you. And as sure as my last name became **Philalethes**[65] when I married, it is the truth."

Edmund was astonished. "You mean to tell me that the diamond used in making the coins was not given to the mint by Mr. Blox? Then why were they told that he was the donor?"

"Two reasons. We did not want the source to be known and we wanted to let everyone know he was still alive. In fact, Seymour does not even know exactly where we hid the diamond iceberg during the storm we created."

Speechless, he turned to face the judge and said, "The prosecution may cross. I believe this witness has said all there needs to be said." He returned to the table and sat next to Liz. He whispered in her ear, "Did you know what she was going to say when you told me to call her?"

Liz simply responded, "No."

Judge Dayot eyed Megotis sitting in pain and enquired, "Does the prosecution wish to cross this witness?"

She did not even rise but simple grunted, "No."

The judge turned to Edmund and added, "Do you have anything else?"

"No, Your Honor. We may proceed to closing arguments if the prosecution is done."

Dayot looked at his monitor one last time and then glanced at the jury and proclaimed, "Everything this witness has revealed has passed the eye-examine as true. No further facts are needed to verify validity of what was disclosed." Turning to face the witness he continued,

“Thank you Oma. You are excused and may return to your room.”

Oma smiled and humbly replied, “You’re welcome, Your Honor.” She rose and slowly walked out of the room. The only sound during her retreat was a soft murmur of whispers coming from the gallery. The light reflecting off her silver hair seemed to form a ring over her head. Edmund thought to himself, she looks like an angel and even has a halo. Dayot broke the silence with, “The prosecution may present their summary.”

Megotis struggled to her feet but stayed behind the table. Both her hands were clenched to form a fist and rested on the table to steady her posture. With a shaky voice she sobbed, “It’s all lies and everyone here is being deceived. You must immediately put Seymour E. Blox to death or suffer the consequences.” She collapsed back into her chair and put her face into her hands to hide the sweat and tears.

Dayot tapped his gavel lightly on the pad and turned to face Edmund. “You may proceed with your summary now.”

Edmund took Liz by the hand and they both rose and walked over to stand before the judge. Edmund respectfully said, “Your Honor, until a few minutes ago, I was not aware that the Great Hall performed all those glorious adventures using the tri-blade and Mr. Blox was only along for the ride. It seems even the REED trial was under the control of the Great Hall and Mr. Blox was only their link to the hearing. Finally, the fact that Seymour E. Blox does not even know where diamond used in the coins came from makes him completely innocent of all charges. As to the corruption of the Great Hall itself, I would like to have you hear from my co-counsel Elizabeth Van Lew.”

Dayot turned to face Elizabeth and said, “Proceed.”

“Thank you, Your Honor. For the past week my good friend Joseph has been using the Catcher’s Mitt to examine all the counterfeit coins he could find. We now know they all came from Speculations Incorporated through the hands of Gered Werop. We have the names of everyone who took the bribes and the names of those who suffered because they refused. Mr. Werop needs to be removed as Acting Director of the coin mint .Also, the people who took bribes to do his dirty work need to be dealt with. That’s all we have to say.” They turned and went back to sit at their table.

Dayot glanced down at the jury and suggested, “You may retire to a private room to discuss your verdict and let me know when you have a unanimous decision.”

The lady foreman stood and said, “No need to leave, we have our ruling and recommendations.” She walked over to the bench and handed Dayot a small tablet with the verdict and a thumbprint of each juror showing unanimous agreement.

The judge stood and demanded, “All rise while I read the verdict of the court.” When everyone was on their feet and intensely waiting for the ruling, Justice Dayot continued, “It is the unanimous decision by the jurors in the trial against Seymour E. Blox, on the date of this recording, that the charges be dropped and have been proven to be false. Mr. Blox must be released immediately from the secure room and a formal apology made for his inconvenience. We, the jury, also find that the prosecution is guilty of attempting to murder Mr. Seymour E. Blox and should be incarcerated and quickly put on trial for this crime. Finally, we recommend that Gered Werop be removed as Acting Director of the coin mint and Elizabeth Van Lew be reinstated as the director of that operation.”

A gigantic roar of approval rose from the gallery. The ovations were so great that even the slamming of

Dayot's gavel could not stop the cheers. Edmund stood, faced the gallery, and raised his hands shouting, "Stop! Please stop!" When the noise lessoned, he turn to face the judge and the jury who were all standing looking over the wall that surrounded their chairs. In a very convincing voice he asserted, "I agree with your verdict, but you need to see the real villain." He turned to face Megotis. She was staring at him with an expression of panic. He pointed at her with both hands and shouted, "Meggie, come out! Creature, be gone!" Liz rose and stood next to Edmund and together they shouted, "Meggie, come out! Creature, be gone!" Soon the gallery joined in and everyone was pointing and shouting, "Meggie come out! Creature, be gone."

Megotis appeared to fall into a **seizure**[66] with spasms and convulsions. It ended when she sat up, threw her head back, open her mouth and red fire appeared to shoot from her like a flame thrower. The fire went right through the wall and was gone, leaving no trace on its exit area. Megotis fell forward, looked up, and weakly whispered, "Where am I?"

The courtroom was extremely quiet and everyone heard her plea. Edmund asked, "What do you remember?"

"I was in a dark cave for a very long time. I could not find my way out and had given up trying. Then I heard my grandmothers voice. I tried to find her but I didn't know where to look. Eventually, I heard her again telling me to come out. The call got stronger and stronger so I climbed out and woke up here. What is this place? Where am I?"

Edmund turned to face the judge and the jury proclaiming, "What you have just seen might be called an **exorcism**[67]. The real villain is the Creature that possessed her. He is from the meta-physical world and uses hate, anger, prejudice, and greed as tools to get

people to do his bidding. He hates us because we have power over him. He must obey when we use unconditional love, called agape, against him. It was agape that Megotis received from her grandmother, and it was that type of love that drove the Creature from her and this room. When the world learns to love like this, we will start living in peace and joy."

Edit Chapter 10[68]

THE CREATURE LEAVING MEGOTIS

Epilogue

Seymour and Ruby were not in the secured room when it was opened. Everyone agreed it was impossible, but they just vanished. The Great Hall was cleansed and started exploring new telepathic visions from an unknown source. A company called EBLOX, (**E**nter **B**y **L**oving **O**thers, **X**anadu), started using toy organic bricks to unite people from different cultures. The Creature was exposed as the true enemy of the human race. The universe was uniting and using agape, *The Ultimate Weapon,* to fight the Creature. But then, that's another story.

The End

About the Author

Arthur F Seymour

Art studied electrical engineering at Christian Brothers University and earned his master's degree at IIT. During college, he authored one of the first patent applications on caller ID. He started his career at Motorola and was one of the first engineers to incorporate integrated circuits in color television. He later managed a group of engineers at Zenith Radio Corporation. Art launched E-Blox Inc. after 44 years of being the President of Elenco Electronics Inc. Presently, he has more than a dozen patents. Greek philosophy is still one of his passions.

Art and his wife, Maryann, were married on August 6, 1966, and have 11 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. They both took joy in telling stories to their grandchildren at bedtime. Art claims these memories inspire all his books. His greatest inspiration in life, however, was his wife, Maryann. Maryann went into the light while holding Art's hand on the morning of 9/11/2019. She was truly Art's Ruby.

Art

Maryann

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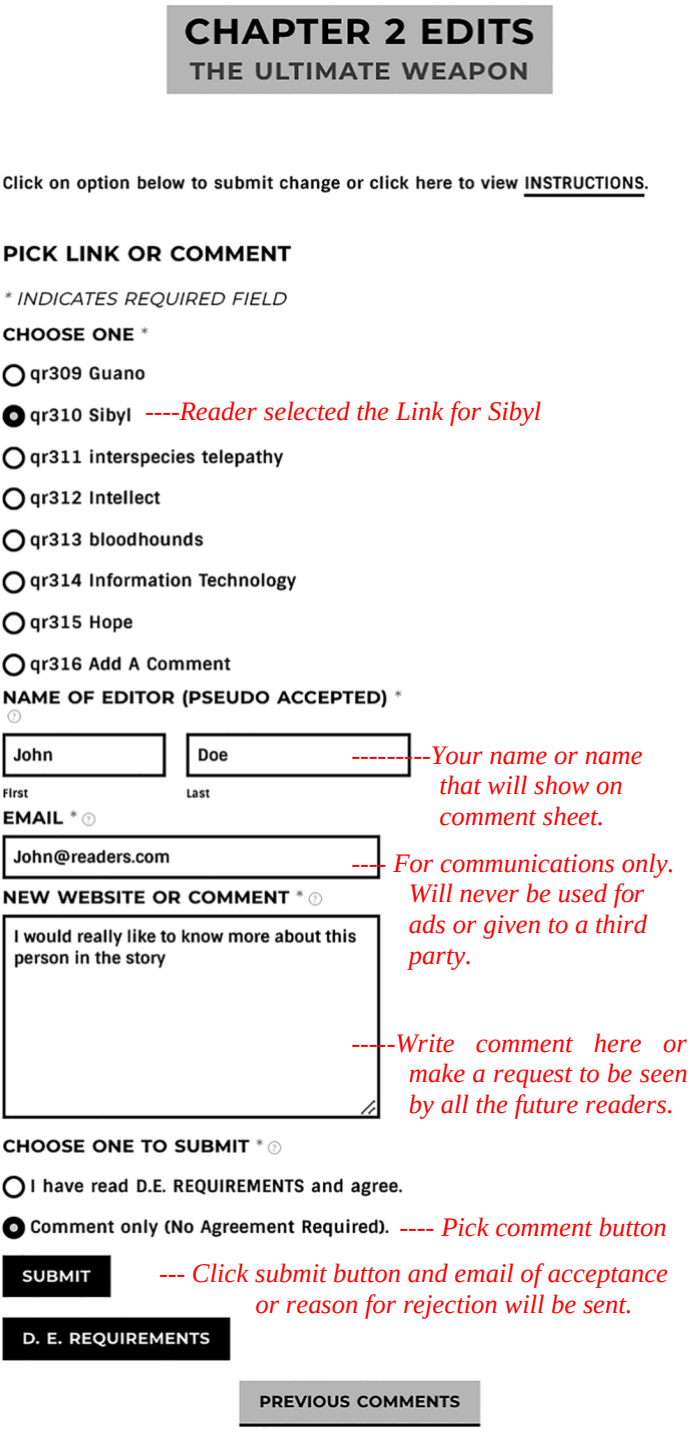

EDITORS NOTE
The Ultimate Weapon

The Ultimate Weapon is a novel that follows the continuing adventures of a group of androids, with particular focus on the story of Seymour and his wife, Ruby. Throughout the novel, Seymour searches for and wants to educate people on the concept of "agape," which can roughly be thought of as pure and unconditional love and the key to ultimate happiness and peace. There are enemies who do not share this belief and seek to discredit Seymour and his cohorts. Through struggles, including a trial, Seymour and his companions succeed in bringing the concept of agape into the consciousness of all.

The strength of this manuscript comes from the clear, simple, and image-filled language that the author employs to tell the story. The characters are well-developed, and each scene is vividly described, so that the reader feels as if he is experiencing the action himself. Dialogue amongst the characters is realistic, and the more science-fiction type aspects are clearly explained so that the reader can easily understand. Finally, the novel moves at an appropriate pace, and does not have any sections which seem slow or bogged down in detail or unnecessary description or dialogue.

Additional Note

The world needs to know more about agape, (unconditional love). Please dear reader add your story of agape in your life to this book. Comment on the love you see in the world, or simply add to this book by finding better loving links. We need your help! Please, become a dynamic editor for all the future readers of this book.