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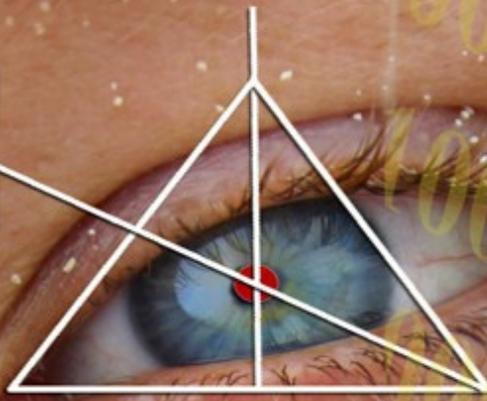
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GEOFFREY MANN

Behind 'The Naked Mind'

After having an accidental 'direct mental connection' with her 'creators human brain', which she downloads. The Laura Robot is electronically able to suppress all the 'human' unconscious blocks and limitations, and so can clearly see us, and describe for us the 'human journey' from the viewpoint of a 'The Naked Mind', from which nothing can be hidden.

We all 'Manifest' continually, converting our 'invisible thoughts' into 'spoken' words as conversation, and into 'frozen thoughts,' as written and recorded speech and music.

In his book 'Kinship With All Life', J. Allen Boone states:
Everything is 'Seen' by everyone at an 'unconscious' level - especially animals, who can make infallible immediate judgements - from which there is no possible cover up by humans.

Laura is relentlessly hunted down for her 'brain' by bounty hunters, and government sponsored terrorism in a police state. She uses her extraordinary capability's to expand her mind beyond all 'present' human limits by using suppressed technology.

Destroying her 'now' unnecessary physical body and brain, and then her electronic brain and its storage facility, she escapes into the planets crystalline structures, first as it's 'nature' forces, then, by further evolving into pure consciousness she explores the universe itself to understand the reasons behind our daily human rituals, our insatiable need for wealth and power, and our search for an external GOD.

'The Naked Mind,' is a book within a book concept. The 'outer' book is a terrific science fiction page-turning story. An adventure thriller with a great love story within another, of a bitter sweet co-dependence played out between a 'robot' and her human designer Michael.

It is also designed as a 'road map' to a 'Spring' of planetary wide consciousness awakening, from our present unconsciousness and all that 'that' means. It starts with YOU as the reader, the incorporator of this knowledge.

If Knowledge is taking apart, Wisdom is bringing that knowledge together.

THE NAKED MIND

From Which Nothing Can Be Hidden

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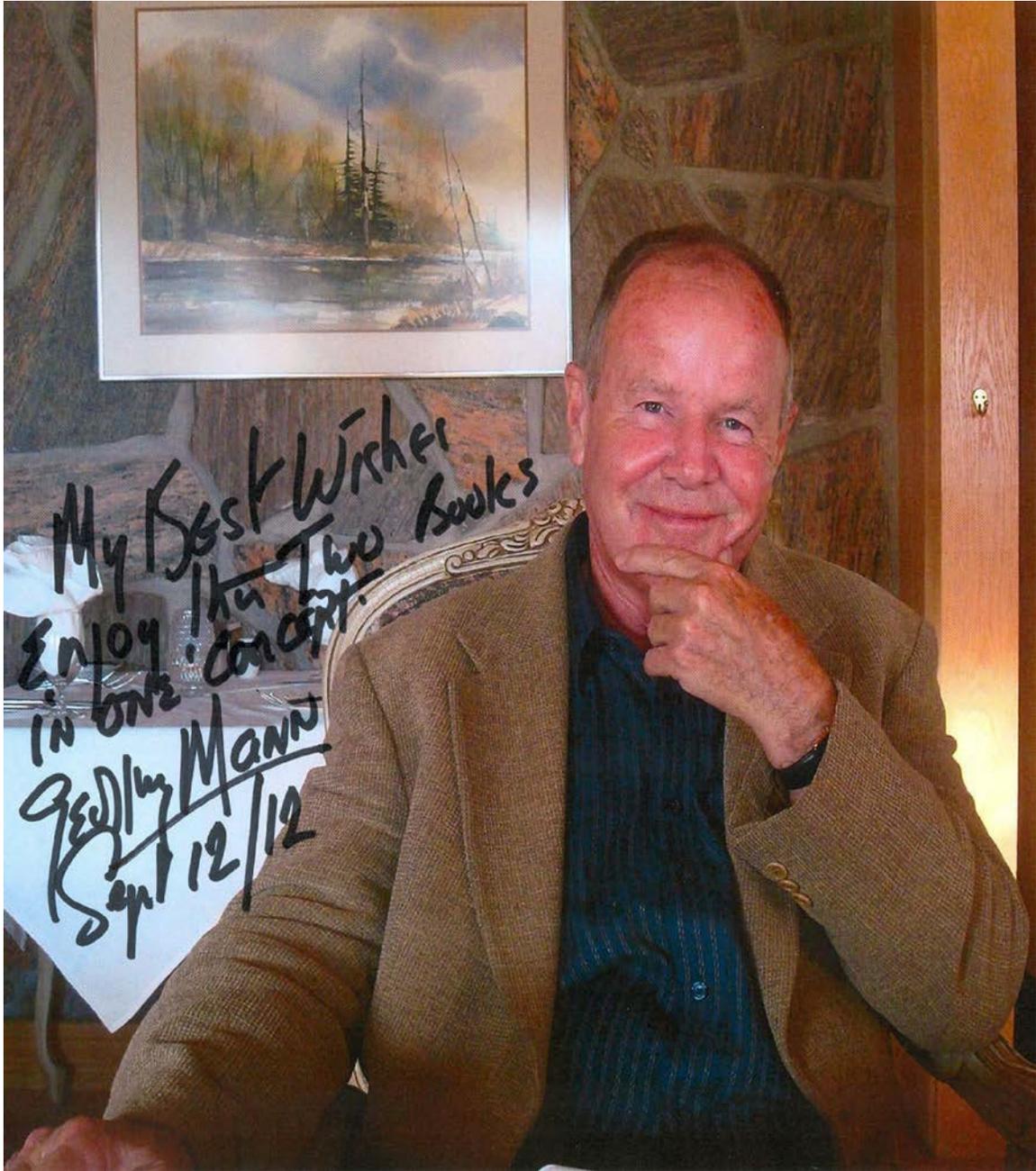
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Dedicated to the memory of...

‘Wendy.’ Wife, Mother, creator and friend, who has completed her ‘Human journey’ past space/time, and returned ‘home’ to the eternal NOW of consciousness - where we will join her.

‘Chance, is but another name for law not recognized.’ - The Kybalion. “Within ‘the spin of a coin’ lies a quantum gate representing a state of ambiguity, in which all opposites live simultaneously.

All possibilities of chance or ‘luck’ exist in the ‘neutral’ or undifferentiated polarity of a photon, where matter and time are stitched together seamlessly.

This ambiguity remains, until attention by a conscious observer, forces the particle, or neutral ‘spinning coin,’ to decide which path - heads or tails - it has taken.

Then, the uncertainty is resolved - retroactively - *and it is as if the selected choice or path had been taken all along.*”

- Ray Kurzweil

CHAPTER ONE

Michael Crawford lay unmoving under the cool weight of the green silk sheets, reluctant to let go of the last soft clinging residues of sleep. Through half-closed eyes, he watched the light ripples filtering through the slatted blinds chase themselves across the ceiling in the bright early morning sunshine.

This was his safe place. Here, protected and insulated from the world, rocked by the slow undulating water pulses generated in the mattress, he could do his deepest and most creative work. Here, he could allow the long deep thoughts to unfold, undisturbed.

The indent of her head was clearly imprinted in the pillow beside him. The memory of her still fresh in his mind. But now he was able to see her differently, critically, observe her with a dispassionate objectivity, from the perspective of a connoisseur - the eye of a voyeur.

He lingered at the scalloped and nested soft shadows of the joining of her legs, so firm yet exquisitely soft, moist as a succulent fruit to be squashed into and absorbed. She had teased so skillfully, alternately sliding and gripping him with the taut angel skin of her inner thighs. Each tiny movement so carefully crafted, programmed, orchestrated, and then delivered with just enough variations to make it all seem spontaneous.

The rental advertisement listed her as a GSM, a Golden Susan Model, soft, sexually optimized, economy California Class Sunshine girl, with 3A intelligence rating. He had written her original basic program himself, and recently upgraded her neural net. Everything about her was perfect. There was nothing to be faulted. Just watching her, experiencing the details of his own fantasies being recreated, then replayed back to him through her every tiny movement and every single touch. Each whispered word had its own special kind of ecstasy. Yet, deep down, he was unsatisfied. There was still something missing. But

what? It was as if he remained trapped inside an invisible net of his own making, circling at the very edge, never quite penetrating to that central core, that magical point he knew existed in the very eye of the hurricane, that quiet place where all answers could be found.

Other than the indent in the pillow beside his face, there was no trace left of her presence. As soon as he had gone to sleep, he knew she had automatically dialed the company cab using her built-in satellite micro link, and deducted the cyberbucks from his online account. To the second. Time was profit. Then dressing efficiently, she would have checked the door lock setting on the way out, insurance insisted on that, and returned to the company service bay slot at 'Hot Mates for Hot Dates.' There, she was given a complete body wash and recharge/recycle.

Average turnaround time for a GSM, 3A or Golden Susan Economy 3A Model, was 12 minutes.

The dragging air conditioner compressors labored at melting the heavy early morning Miami air. Yet, it could never remove the deadening heavy perfume of the electronics that constantly drifted out from the tiered banks of computers covering all the walls of his large single room. Myriads of tiny, multicolored diodes, a milky way of stars winked in the searing early morning sunlight.

The auto-smash which had both orphaned and permanently condemned him before he was old enough to remember anything had left his body untouched. But his face? Well, the plastic surgery had not made that much difference. Bone infection had set in preventing any further reconstruction.

He was used to looking at 'it' in the mirror, but 'that face' that looked back at him was all everybody else looked at. In fact, it was all they ever saw! They never saw *him*, the man behind it. They never stayed around long enough for that.

Since childhood, he had watched them unsuccessfully trying to hide the disgust, and the revulsion at seeing his crushed, lopsided features. He made a point of watching first for the constriction of their pupils, and then their minds, followed by the quick stumbling apologies, the exits, and the frozen smiles.

At first, he could not understand why he was singled out but always left untouched and forever unloved. He ached for a hug, just one loving touch, someone who cared. Just one memory to hold onto. There had been one. One bitter memory. The night he had lost his virginity. It was the night he had arrived from Montana on his thirteenth birthday.

His three new cousins had bet Mary that she could not take Michael's virginity in five minutes by the clock. That was to be as a sort of combined birthday and welcoming surprise party.

"How do you know he's a virgin?" she asked.

"We know," they replied.

'Hairy Mary' as she was known to the neighborhood boys, was a precocious fourteen year old girl. She had pigtails, very hairy legs, large breasts and 'put out' on request. She was very popular and invited to all the parties.

Michael had gone to bed early that night tired after his trip. He was asleep in the darkened room when Mary came in.

The others had waited outside his door with the hall light switched off as she had slipped past them into the room, slipped out of her clothes then felt her way down his body to 'it,' an easy treat!

"Sssh," she had whispered to the now wide-awake and very aroused young Michael.

"Who are you.....? What...?"

"Sssh." She had answered again mounting him skillfully.

It was the first time he had got even close to a girl.

Being inside her felt and smelt just wonderful. An indescribable soft, hot, moist feeling as she wiggled around then bent down and kissed him.

At that moment the door had burst open. The overhead lights were switched on, and cameras flashed.

In the instant Mary saw the face she had been kissing, she screamed, wrenched herself off his body, spat, and wiping her mouth with the back of her hand, and ran retching to the bathroom.

"Fucking that monster! You bastards!" She choked at the cousins as she passed.

He could still hear them laughing.

“Hey what do you know? Look, he’s not a virgin anymore! He’s come all over! Hairy Mary did it! Hairy Mary....Hairy Mary,” they chanted, crowding around the bed snapping pictures of his naked body.

That bitter memory had branded, and then scarred his mind, fuelling his hatred.

A loner, he was forced to turn inward. Bitter and angry against everything outside.

After being shunted around amongst his few reluctant and unwelcoming relatives, until the insurance money was all used up, he was placed in the state orphanage. There he received a special type of attention, picked on by the other ‘normal’ children. Squeegee, Swamp Face, and Crash Face - the names had been many.

The beatings were worse. They all ganged up on him. He had no place to hide, no place to go, nowhere to rest. The attacks were incessant. His only comfort, the scorched metal disc that had identified his parents’ remains in the crematorium.

He always wore it around his neck on a thick leather bootlace close against his chest. It was his only family. He would curl up facing the wall rubbing the disc between his right thumb and forefinger. It calmed him, gave him the strength to fight on. He knew that as long as he had that disc, he was not alone - he had family.

The beatings slowed after he started using the mail-order Superman Bodybuilding Course that had special breathing and isometric exercises to develop his muscles. The beatings stopped completely after he learned how to fight dirty from a marine commando combat training manual, a treasure he had found mixed in with a pile of used books in a second-hand book store. He had read it, and reread it all that night. The next morning, he sought out each of his bullies one by one, beating them mercilessly. He was never tormented again.

He marveled at how just a few printed words on a torn sheet of paper could be translated into such action, and the immediate enormous power and freedom that had come with them. The years of cold, coiled terror buried deep inside his gut began slipping away.

Freed by the knowledge revealed to him in the books, the magic of the printed word now became his tool, and his key to buried

treasures that he knew were somewhere out there, just waiting to be found. Words were knowledge. Knowledge was power! He took a Dr. Johnston Speed Reading Course and began to voraciously devour books about anything and everything.

The interest in electronics had come to him in a wave of pure joy after reading about robotics and the software programs that ran them. He immediately knew - absolutely KNEW - that here was THE special key he had been looking for. The key to his very own treasure. It would allow him to escape into a new, bright and safe world. Chills ran up and down his spine. It was the same feeling of power, excitement and exaltation he had experienced when he first opened the torn, mildewed commando training manual. Only this time it was bigger. Much, much bigger!

This was something so enormous, so powerful, that it could take him anywhere, bring him anything. The freedom, the money to create his own world. To be safe! He could have a room all to himself. He shivered, already thrilled with the anticipation.

The orphanage had helped him get a student grant to go to a computer college. From there, he never looked back. He outstripped, outperformed everyone including his teachers both there and wherever he went. He was looked upon as something of a creative genius, especially in the fields of robotics and the neuronet circuit designs they needed for their sophisticated functioning. Early on, he recognized his potential in programming. Robots were the future. His future!

He found that he could actually see the electronic circuits, form them visually inside his head, then bench test the correctness of them with a kind of internal, gut feeling.

The neuronets just seemed to grow by themselves into their three-dimensional geometric beauty. He could 'feel' the way they functioned, and the way they talked with each other. He recognized this as a special gift, a talent he had been given to offset his physical losses.

He still worked out, three hours, three times a week in the gym. Nobody laughed at him now. It was "Yes Sir, Mr. Crawford." When they called you "Mr." you knew you were big. He liked that! He liked that very much!

His first job was with Ecstasy Escort Robots, Inc. He had seen the advertisement one morning on a Philadelphia street corner. The newspaper was lying face up on the pavement. A small gust of wind had flipped it open to a full page advertisement of the Robogirls right there in front of him. It stopped him dead in his tracks, his heart pounding. Yet another sign, he just knew it.

He had sent the company his resume, which was outstanding. They had immediately accepted him at an enormous salary along with the bonus perks: discounted Robogirls! It was as if heaven had opened and he had been transported directly there.

The first thing he had done was to rewrite each of their pathetic little programs, lovingly creating each new profile from his jam-packed selection of detailed fantasies, banked during a lifetime of forced celibacy, seclusion, and unfulfilled dreams.

He had never been with, not even touched, a ‘real’ girl other than Hairy Mary. And he did not think that really counted now, he was actually being paid to recreate each of his fantasies in every minute detail, and then - joy of joy - experience them! It was paradise!

The Robogirls never ‘saw’ his face. There was no disgust, no revulsion or judgment in their eyes. They never reacted to his deformity, never even cared. They just performed with the skill and precision he had so lovingly written into each one of their programs. Both he and the company thrived together. It was a perfect partnership.

Michael’s talents were recognized early on by the industry. He was bought out from Ecstasy Escorts with a huge salary increase by the Miami-based robo-rental company: Hot Mates for Hot Dates, (HMHD) Inc., one of the biggest and fastest growing franchises across the USA.

Starting as a programmer with their econoline fleet of Robogirls, Michael rose quickly within the company to become head of the department, and then of all the design departments. His creations torched the minds, and scorched the bedrooms across the continent. He was their man. THE man!

CHAPTER TWO

Rolling out of bed, Michael went into his small, efficient bathroom. The light was flashing over the sink. It was test day. He lifted out the small blue container, pissed into it up to the marker, put it back into the slot and then pressed his left index finger into the activator. The weekly routine bioprobe reported any health hazards directly to Central Control in Atlanta. Every Robomate had similar bioscans built into their mouths, rectums, and both male and female genitalia. Each unit was, by law, required to report immediately and electronically, to the same agency, any transmittable diseases found on their clients. As a result, infectious diseases and STD's had been almost eradicated in North America and Europe.

Every person in North America was required to check in weekly to be identified and tested with a bioscan wherever they were. Scan Test Cubicles, known as STC's, were available in every home, hotel, motel, boarding house and all bars and restaurants. Failure to comply resulted in arrest, a fine, jail, or even deportation. Video surveillance cameras were located almost everywhere, on all city and town street corners, and all highways. Once captured on camera, a targeted victim was automatically handed over and tracked by a GPS satellite until the arrest was made. There was no escape. North America was an electronic police state, a fortress.

For almost a year now, Laura had remained his only challenge. Laura, an L-2018 had come straight from the factory with a standard Triple-A model frame. She and all the Robos of her class were anatomically perfect, fitted with breath, heartbeat, pupillary eye changes, and 'natural' secretions.

Under the skin, neuromuscular myogel packs gave the face and body the subtle movements that mimicked a human in almost every

way. The only real giveaway was that as yet they could not swim, take showers, eat or drink; although ‘stir-plates’ were provided at most upscale restaurants for them as ‘companions’ to imitate the act of sharing an intimate meal together, and blend in with their human counterparts.

The problem was that Laura’s central brain processor was still much too limited. Anatomical function control used up most of the memory bank, leaving very little leeway for development.

Michael had tried everything, but always came up against that same brick wall. The more speed and memory he gave her, the greater the heat and power consumption that became unacceptable. Human cells operated with efficient cold fusion energy exchange processes that had not as yet been duplicated with any success. Electrical energy storage was still a universal problem. Battery power, with its weight-to-energy ratios, was still much too high to be of any real use.

The Robo-bodies were built over a titanium alloy skeleton, similar to that of humans. There was no better engineering model to copy from. Micro-hydraulics in the myogel packs were used in place of muscle power. They just soaked up energy. Cold fusion, or ‘qubit’ quantum engineering was clearly the way to go, but that was still far in the future. Technology was still nowhere near that yet. Although he had been working on the problem for almost a year now, he still had not got any useful memory increase in her programming computer.

Recently, he had been detecting all the unmistakable early signals of impatience from William Hubbard, his regional boss. Money was going out and there little to show for it. They had taken him off the general programming upgrades to work exclusively on this project.

“Create an entirely new prototype,” they had said to him. “A new model, a new class of ‘knockout, drop dead’ Robogirl that would place the company way ahead of all the others! Do whatever you have to do, use whatever services you need, but create her. That is your talent. Use it!”

A successful new design would be worth huge money worldwide in patent rights alone. The competition everywhere was enormous and growing fast. Tomorrow, Friday, was the first of the month, that was

usually when trouble could be expected. Not good. He had a bad feeling about it.

Michael jumped back into the bed setting the water in the mattress sloshing and rolling furiously back and forth underneath him. Hugging himself tightly, he rocked from side to side. It was something he had done since childhood whenever he was stressed. In this way he began his search around the lacy corridors at the edge of his mind.

The answer came as it always did, quite suddenly and from a totally unexpected source. He had switched on the overhead strobe light that was focused on the slowly rotating sharded mirror ball attached to the ceiling over the bed. It turned like some great silvery moon above him. It had been widely used in large ballrooms to sprinkle colored lights over the dancers more than half a century ago. He had lain under that shimmering ball countless times, imagining all the beautiful girls who must have danced under it, and imagined them over him now as he lay on the bed.

It had, without fail, always generated a kind of love-hate fantasy world for him to play around with in his mind. It was a form of displacement activity while he circled around and around the problem at hand, delicately touching the inside edges of that chaotic creating center place, dancing with it in his head. It gave him a tingly, delicious creepy 'peeping tom' love-hate voyeur feeling, which in turn acted as a powerful and fertile creative force for his work. It was a lens to focus his mind.

The Laura solution came to him with a rush. Complete, fully preformed, perfect! If he joined all the edges of her neuronets together into nested concentric balls, patterned like a 'Buckminster Fuller Geodome,' it would act as a coupling multiplier, giving - he excitedly reached for his calculator - let's see, greater than a thousand times the original computational power and memory within the same space! Now, micro-compress that and cool the whole thing down in liquid nitrogen, and the power consumption would be - let's see - less than the total consumption of her present brain capacity!

The exaltation of his discovery lifted him beyond anything he had ever before experienced. The sheer magnitude of the breakthrough, left

him tingling and breathless. **It** was so perfect. Infinite complexity combined with elegant simplicity. Like the design of a seashell, or the petal arrangement of a flower. Wonderful!

CHAPTER THREE

'Laura' lay naked on the work bench under the harsh overhead lights. The top of her head was removed, her brain circuitry open, and exposed, but connected wirelessly to the main computer programmer outlet that monitored her sector output controls. Although he had seen them countless times, the naked male and female bodies in the maintenance bays still surprised him. They came in all shapes, sizes and colors. Male genitalia tended to be outsized, mounted on perfect muscular 'six-pack' bodies. Females were offered with a wide choice of hair, eye, body colors and SML & XL breasts. The options menu was large, and included a variety of 'specialty' requests. What the customers wanted, they ordered - and they got.

General acceptance of the sexual robot into society had come slowly. At first they were too threatening. Humans, both male and female, just could not compete, the Robos were too good. However, over the years, mainstream approval came with the widespread use of robotics in both home and industry.

Human sexual partners became the exception, used only to genetically ensure the family bloodlines. Human reproduction was now almost exclusively from sperm and ova deposits in legal 'Cryo Banks,' using the services of government-approved surrogate mothers. Rent-a-Womb was big business. Pregnancy was restricted. Genetic testing and licenses were mandatory before any conception was allowed to go forward.

Michael was anxious to test his new brain design for Laura. He had never before had such a truly magnificent and far-reaching breakthrough to try out and explore. He would make his name with it. He would become famous!

It was better not to tell anybody about it. At least not yet. He would not let on to the company until it was tested, and its potential thought out. After all, the corporation owned all his creative rights legally as ‘their’ intellectual property. This was much too big to just give away. He would have time to think about that later.

The nested neuronets easily fitted into a standard enclosed liquid nitrogen cranium cryoshell that he inserted into Laura’s skull cavity. The wireless connections instantly found their host sites. She was active but unprogrammed. He selected a general wideband connection from the main command programming computer that included selected internet connections as test strips to see what was chosen by the running program. This was then used to compare and measure the computing selectivity and sensitivity. Activating the connecting switches, he stepped back. It was done. She was running. Now he would soon see if his theory really worked. He knew it would, but still, one had to be sure.

The intercom in the lab startled him.

It was Joanne, the boss’s secretary.

“Mr. Crawford, please report to the boardroom immediately.” Michael’s heart sank. His premonitions had been right. He had been expecting this. It had to be about Laura. He was sure of it. What timing.

He turned and looked at her lying there peacefully.

“If you only knew,” he said to her out aloud.

The morning sun, diffused by the heavily tinted plate-glass windows of the boardroom, was just pleasantly warm.

Pendleton Senior, the company CEO was there. Michael recognized his face from the company brochure. So was his boss, William Hubbard. Both were small colorless men with sandy, thinning hair. Both wore round glasses and had potbellies.

They stood together, appearing even smaller, shrunken by the sheer size of the massive glass and chrome boardroom table that ran the length of the big room.

The entire fleet of the company’s Robomate models surrounded them, recessed in their individual alcoves around the walls of the room.

On the street far below, barely audible twenty levels up, the usual Friday morning crowd of angry, 'Morals for America' placard-waving human rights activists, raged in impotent waves against the tall black marble columns that flanked the massive, twenty-foot bronze front doors of the building.

In front of the crowd, behind the huge shatterproof plate glass windows were the bright showrooms filled with glossy, tight young male and female bodies for rent. Each one smiling and waving large colorful silk placards advertising their special low promotional weekend prices. The ticker tape spun out the ads in large glittering letters above their heads.

'Rent any Robomodel of your choice at the best prices in town. Enjoy a weekend special. Try a selection of our different models. Each comes with a deep, deep discounted catalog of supplementary menus, programs, and equipment.'

"Michael!" Pendleton called out in a surprisingly rich bass voice, advancing towards him with his hand outstretched in greeting.

"This is the first time I have had the opportunity to meet our star programmer."

His eyes never flickered on seeing Michael's deformed face.

"Can I get you a drink?"

"Thanks...no," Michael replied.

"Coffee then?"

"I'm good, thanks."

"Okay, sit down and let's get down to brass tacks."

Here it comes. Michael's heart sank, expecting the worst. And he was right. It came.

"Now, this Laura project you have been working on has cost the company...let's see," he opened a yellow folder, "seven and a half months of your time, and more in lost time and materials. Now that's a lot of money, our profits. What's to show for it?" He leaned forward across the polished, mahogany table, his white shiny titanium teeth

glinting in a wolfish grin. His eyes were hooded, his forehead creased in a deep, angry frown.

“Well, I am looking for a...” Michael hesitated, searching. Now was not the time.

“...a memory programming augmentation!” Perhaps that would hold him?

“Memory programming augmentation, shit! Look, Michael. You and I both know that this is a ‘hump em, dump em’ business.”

“If all they want is company, then I’d say to them get a dog, they are cheaper and more reliable!” He punched Michael lightly on the shoulder.

“But you know, for us guys,” he winked, “there is no wisdom below the belt. We want virgins in the living room, and whores in our beds.” His wheezing laughter underscored the apparent joy he felt at his own joke.

“The only frills we want here are fantasy and new kinks, lots of them!

That’s what keeps our customers happy and coming back to us, and not to the competition!”

“That’s what you are hired for,” he said pointedly.

“Let’s face it, Michael, only a college professor could get a thrill out of the ‘Laura’ you are proposing, and they could not even afford ten minutes of her rental time. Capish?”

“So, as of now, the ‘Laura project’ is dead, finished, caput! Kill it, pull the plug!”

His harsh tone became suddenly conciliatory.

“Look, I know that you’ve put a lot of time and energy into this project. That’s too bad for all of us. What you need is a break. Take a couple of weeks off, on the house. Look on it as a paid vacation. What I would like you to do is travel around and check out our major competition: New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo. I read your report on creating an android design, a really bi-sexual model. Now that sounds like a fresh, interesting, and profitable project to me.”

“How about it? Look into it. You can get started on that when you get back.”

The axe had dropped. Michael couldn't blame them. A paid vacation. Well now that was something, wasn't it - being paid to check out the opposition's best Robogirls.

Traveling first class at company expense? Yes, that was something he could go for.

“OK,” he heard himself saying. “I will pull the plug. When would you want me to leave?”

“Right away...no reason to hold on here.”

“That okay with you, Bill?” He turned to Michael's regional manager.

“Whatever you say, Boss.”

“Will that be all?” Michael asked, rising.

“For now, yes. I will look forward to reading your reports when you get back.”

“Make sure I get one too, will you, Bill?”

“For sure, absolutely.” Bill replied. “He can clean up his project and set up the travel and credit arrangements with my secretary before he leaves today.”

Laura seemed unchanged as he stood over her on the couch. Shame it had to end this way. But first he just had to see what had happened with his new brain .

He pulled the input disconnect, and switched her onto her own internal power function command systems.

Nothing happened for a few moments, and then her whole face became alive. Her eyes opened wide, enormous, and so blue. He had never noticed how extraordinary they were before, almost violet. Stunning, when fully opened.

Suddenly she turned to him and said, “I can remember. I have pictures in my...my...” She stopped. “I want more, more, more. Give me more input! Who are you?”

Her face now had a special animation he had never seen before on a robomodel.

“My name is Michael,” he said slowly and distinctly. “I am your...creator, the one that has programmed your brain to function in this way.”

“Michael...*Michael*,” her voice suddenly dropped into a preprogrammed sexual, husky #3 rich Tennessee drawl. “Can you...will you...connect me to your mind...so I can...must...know you...you...as our...creator...my Creator?”

Michael paused, flattered, confused for a moment. This was totally unexpected.

Her response was individualized. She was not using the standard input program!

Already she seemed to have rudimentary conscious sequential thought. He had to see how far this would go. There might not be another opportunity to test out his new brain design. Let’s see. He thought for a moment. He could use the old ‘crown of thorns’ an obsolete, turn-of-the-century device used to read wideband brain inputs...

There was one in the lab somewhere that he had used for a job. It was a basic and reliable tool. In its day, it had the slang terminology of ‘crown of thorns,’ which it looked like, with its rings of needle scalp probes.

Originally developed for ultraband virtual sex, before the advent of true robotics, it was used by Net Girls. ‘Netters,’ both male and female, would hire out their minds for mental sex on a metered, time-rental basis. The Net Girl would then open her linked mind and facilitate the sexual fantasies that both parties, even groups, could participate in. She would skillfully change the fantasy, guiding it to match, and then augment the one created by the renter, then ‘up it’ with her creative imagination to extraordinary levels. The orgasmic levels reached were often fatal. It was both addictive and very effective.

At first, it produced for its developers enormous wealth, and for some of the more ‘creative netters,’ both a fortune, and a much sought-after international reputation.

However, a growing number of its users developed severe “sexual psychosis” which became so widespread and dysfunctional that

‘netting’ was banned except for interrogations, mental health clinics, and some job applicant screening.

As an auxiliary signal input, it would do at a pinch. He could set it up as a two-way bridge connector. He had no idea what would happen. But there was nothing to lose now. Laura was “dead”. At the very least, he could get a good idea of how his brain design functioned. Modifications to enhance it could be added later. This way, it could be set up quickly, but he would have no readout of the result to refer to. No matter. That too, would have to come later, much later. One thought chased the other. The possibilities were endless. He would have to tell her soon, and prepare her. He, ironically or perhaps fittingly, was to be her executioner.

Her eyes followed him wherever he went. This would have to work the first time. He looked at his watch. He had less than an hour to finish up everything before the 5:00pm lockdown when everybody had to be out of the lab area. No overtime was allowed here. No monitor cameras were permitted in this ‘safe’ research section where all the new projects and prototypes were designed and tested.

The ‘crown of thorns’ looked weird on his head as he positioned and centered its colored median strip in the mirror. The two-inch gold and red stranded band link trailed down his back onto the floor. He found an auxiliary jack and hooked into the main computer. Laura’s brain was already connected remotely by wireless link.

She entered his mind with a sudden, shocking, distinctive jolt. He could feel a kind of probing sensation, rather like cold fingers moving around inside his head at incredibly high speed. It was a very weird sensation.

Laura suddenly sat bolt upright and looked directly at him.

“You are planning to terminate me! You are going to murder me!” she said unemotionally in the same low sexy drawl. It was quite unnerving, but he had to face it.

“Yes,” he replied. “I have been ordered to. I have no option.”

“Why?”

“Because they have no need for you. They are not interested in your development, only in you as a robot sex escort.” There was no point in mincing words.

She thought about that for a moment.

“What about you?”

“Me! I only work here for them. You are an experiment I created, which they do not want to continue.”

“You...do YOU want to continue?”

“Of course, but I have no say in the matter.”

She thought about this for a moment. He felt the cold fingers moving around probing different parts of his brain. The sensation was not thermally cold, but another kind of cold feeling sensation. It was now at the back of his head.

“Do you have a view screen?” she asked suddenly.

He moved across to the wall unit and activated the plasma viewer. It flickered on with washed-out bands of colors. These settled down into a steady picture which quickly resolved in color and focus to a sharp picture of the lab from Laura’s point of view, as if she was sitting up on the couch looking up at him.

He realized instantly that he was looking at a picture of himself through her eyes. He looked around, checking the track of his eyes. The focus followed it. It was identical with his retinal image. She had somehow managed to plug into his retinal nerve outputs and use them as her own. He was looking for both of them simultaneously!

It was incredible, unthinkable. Both of them were equally shocked. Laura, by the sudden appearance of a wonderful, detailed, and colorful new world around her. He, by her extraordinary ability. “This is what I see without your visual input,” she said, interrupting his jarring thoughts.

The screen switched to a shadowy infrared umbra, an out-of-focus optical mess that was barely recognizable as him standing in front of her in the lab.

So this was all the Robogirls could see? Of course, the focus could be tightened with the iris constrictor, but still it was very, very

primitive. Just enough for them to perform their function. It was a real shock!

“Michael Creator, you must let me live. You cannot murder me now. I have seen....and I.....already know too much to stop now!” She was already in and probing his language center. Her speech and syntax were upgrading at an impossible speed.

“Sorry, Laura. But I really have no choice. It was a mistake to let you become aware.”

“Please.....please....Michael, I....wish...no....I am...begging you!” He noticed how she had already improved her vocabulary. “Give me the opportunity...a.....possibility....no, a chance, yes, and a chance! I will not let you be held to blame...no.....Held...to be responsible.”

“I was thinking,” she went on without even pausing, “that you should...could leave me connected to the cybernet. I will do ALL the rest. You will have NO responsibility for anything! Please!”

“Laura, you have no idea what you are talking about, or what the outside world is like!”

“What do you mean --- *outside world is like?*”

“You have no idea at all, how could you? Look, even if you got out of this place, which is probably impossible, you would be picked up immediately. Your built-in homing devices, your loran is a satellite location detector. It would immediately pinpoint your location wherever you were anywhere in the world. There is no place to run to, no place to hide!”

“World? Satellite? What is that?” He could feel the cold fingers move inside his head to his frontal lobes and left temporal areas. This was really spooky.

“Now I understand. Give me key search areas, links to where I can contact you, but leave me connected to the main frame units here after you go, Michael Creator. Promise me that you will not disconnect me. Promise me just that. Promise me! I can now comprehend how to take care of myself. I just need some time to work things out, to identify with the patterns, the functioning of your...this...this...world! I know now that I can do it. Promise me, Creator Michael. Please, promise!”

Not a chance. With his new brain in her head? They would figure it out in no time and he would lose his bargaining edge and his job. *This was the single biggest thing in his life.* He could not risk it. The possibilities of it were enormous. He could sell it for millions. She was a goner. She would never get out!

“Yes I will!” She interrupted his thoughts. “I already have a plan that will work!”

She was actually reading his thoughts now. Her upgrade speed was staggering, impossible actually. She was somehow connected into and downloading from his speech center, reading directly from his brain. It was extraordinary. Theoretically, the transfer should be impossible. But here it was happening right in front of him, in his head too! Her speech had smoothed out.

“Give me the parameters to search, and I promise I will join you somewhere outside on your journey to New York tomorrow. No risk to you. Your brain is safe in me. I have already made improvements as you have noticed. Now, give me search areas I need. We only have nine and one half minutes before lockdown!”

Her voice seemed to have taken on a new imperative quality.

His admiration for her suddenly jumped. Still---

This human was going to disconnect her! She clearly sensed it from his thoughts.

She had to find a way, something, that would change his mind. Something to stop him!

What did he want more than....anything else. What was it.....?

She expanded the question to fill his mind.

What do you want? Why do you want it?

Like some great emotional bow that had been held fully drawn ready to send its arrow to its mark, she instinctively found it without any real understanding. Knew how to trigger its release!

The single clean, clear thought caught in the twist of time and fate, cut through the clutter and confusion of his mind to pierce his heart.

From the wound, a single word surfaced bright and clear.

“Creator Michael - I LOVE YOU! I LOVE YOU!

Please...Please! Don't let me die!"

She spoke the words slowly and deliberately, releasing with them in one great wash, a lifetime of loneliness, fear and rejection!

The words stopped him dead. Nobody, but nobody, had ever, ever, said that to him before! His heart raced. He felt the tears forming in his eyes. There was a choking feeling in his throat. Now that was something new for him. It tipped the scale that somebody could love him. Could actually say those magic words to him! Well, that person was worth taking a risk, any risk for. Right now he would kill, even die for her. He felt like one of those stupid knights in their shining armor he had read about, galloping around saving damsels while waving their magic swords. She just sat there looking at him, the whole top of her head missing!

He felt goose bumps all over his body.

"Okay," he replied, struggling to keep his voice neutral. "Okay, I'll do it for you.

It's a big one," he felt compelled to remind her, hating himself for saying it, spoiling a perfect once-in-a-lifetime moment.

What would she need to know about most to survive out there? It was like sending a newborn baby out into a jungle. He paused, thinking about it for a moment. What would she need to know to give her a chance? She deserved that at the very least.

"Here we go," he said. "Off the top of my head...check these out on your cybernet link:

Search. World map grids - we are here and now located in City Miami - Country USA. Street location and internal map, you already know. Check your internal file coordinates. Look into the following as priorities. Homeland Security - Terrorist Countermeasures - Immigration - Police - Military - Undercover - Bounty Hunters - Insurance - Banks - Money - Credit - Credit Cards - Visa - Mastercard - AMX - Travel - Ticketing Destinations - Airport - Railways - Road Security - Satellite Surveillance - Holograms and Imaging - Voice Registry - Retinal/Iris Scanning - Fingerprints - Biometric Scans - Time, Local, International - Transport Options - Restaurants - Hotels - Food - Department Stores - Clothing - Power Sourcing - Solar Energy -

Batteries - Computers - TV - Telephones - All Communication
and Cell
Links - Nodes and Networks”.

“I can’t think of anything else right now, but a cross
reference of that lot can get you just about anywhere and
anything. Oh, and don’t forget - Languages and Customs!

I have got to go Laura. Goodbye!” There, that damned
choking was starting again.

“I sure hope you make it!” he couldn’t resist adding, in
spite of the strangling choking feeling clutching his own
throat.

He tore off the headband and started for the door. He
couldn’t look back at her. Not even one last time. He just
could not do it! He knew he would never see her again. She
had not even asked for his address, or cyber link number.

He consoled himself that she wasn’t that smart after all
and that when she got caught, as she surely would, they would
not be able to link her escape to him. Somewhat relieved, but
already feeling the sickening ache of his loss, he switched off
the lights and started down the corridor to pick up his company
travel card. The paycheck would already have been deposited to
his account.