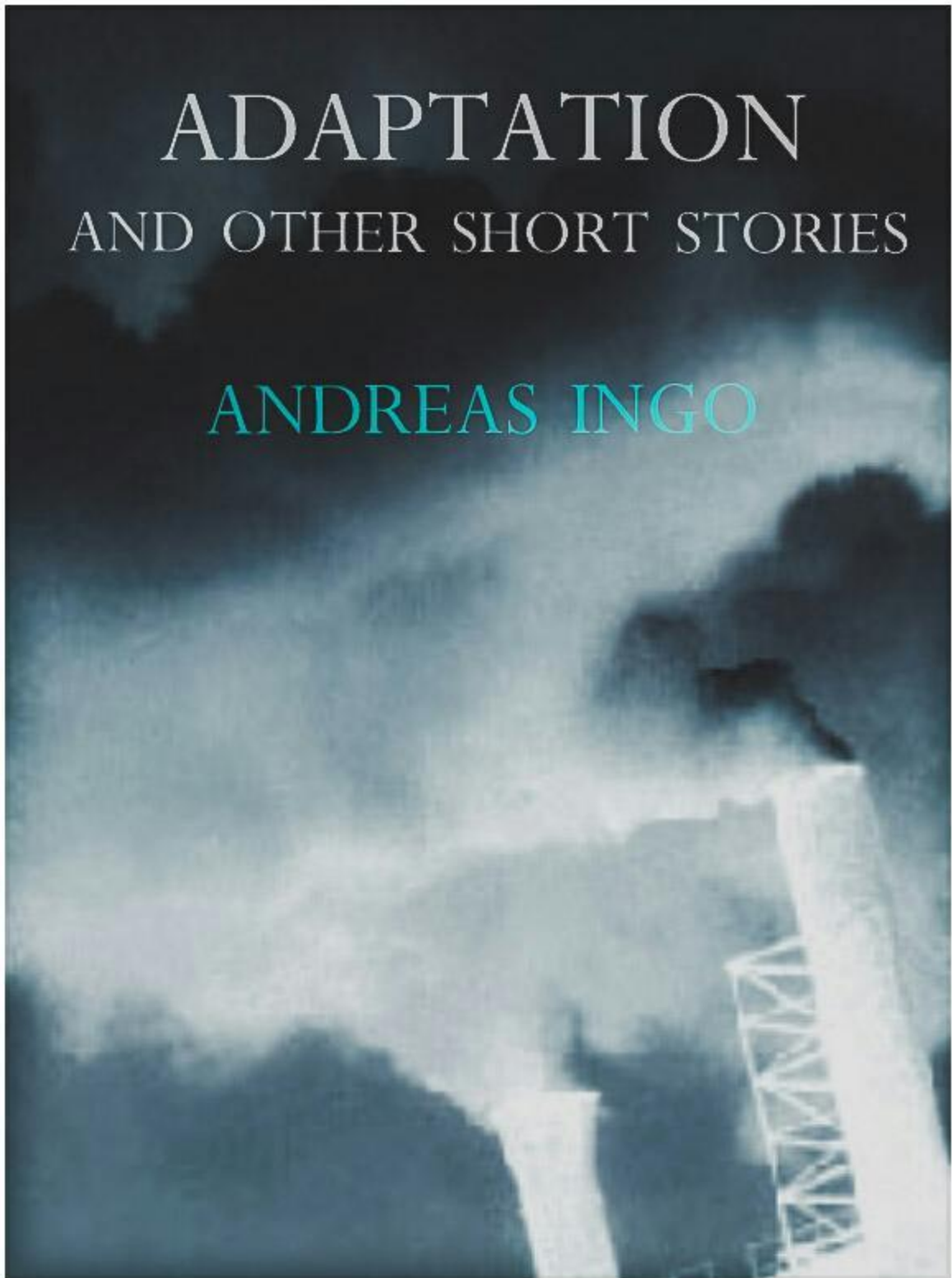


ADAPTATION
AND OTHER SHORT STORIES

ANDREAS INGO



Lost In New America

My name is Philip Canton. I'm an architect, a designer/construction artist from the depths of old America. I'm on a highway. Driving my car on the rugged surfaces on the American mainland. Going west from New York, passing buildings with torn and windswept walls. Looking like something from the old, old west.

I have pretty good moods. The sense of the realization of a teenager dream. Projecting my will into construction design in a far off village along the American highway.

When I arrive at the village I'm not met with handshakes and fine gestures. Instead I walk by myself to inspect the torn and dusty buildings of the village. Some old dogs and a sneaking cat make their appearance among the buildings.

The sun is hot. The desert surrounding the village is dusty. Decorated with sand and a few bushes. The desert stretches for miles up to the horizon. And only a couple of thin clouds are seen upon the sky.

Eventually I'm walking up to the construction office. To shake hands with the supervisor overseeing the whole construction business.

"You are a bit early." The man says, "But feel free to inspect the surrounding areas. We really need something to draw people into our village. Gambling worked for Las Vegas too."

"You are correct." I say and inspect the blue collar look of the construction supervisor.

A newspaper can be seen in a close by stand.

* * *

I start with the first sketches of the gamble centre. A lot of space is needed combined with initial vectors to create a first impression. A look discussed by the boss of the construction company.

* * *

As time moves on I try to hide it. I try to neglect the impressions I get from the local towns people.

I met a woman in my walk to a nearby grocery store the other day. She looked at me with the most hollow eyes. Eyes that maybe had been drained from new impressions. I said hello and she said hello in return. Not much more could be said.

I use game machines too. I put up a lot of coins to spend some time away from my hotel room. Away from my office.

Now I'm walking with the supervisor along the expansive area where the gambling centre will be built. It's a yellow and dusty area of flattened ground. Newspapers are blowing in the wind.

"Hey Philip!" The supervisor says to me, "Are you finished with the gambling centre design?"

"I have only begun." I say, "This area needs some grand touches." I say, "It will be easy for many to find leisure."

"I think so too." The supervisor says.

We walk together to visualize the grand design of the new gambling centre. It will be like a miniature version of Las Vegas. Something for lonely truck drivers driving along the American highway at night.

"You take care of it." The supervisor says, "I trust your company."

* * *

As time progresses forward I'm struck by the hard reality of the engineering work. I had pictured something more eventful. Something more daring and different. But I'm stuck in an average

American village. A prey to indifferent forces just waiting for the sign to begin with the construction work.

I put pressure upon myself. I picture the whole gamble centre with the powers of my subconscious mind. I need inspiration. I need feedback. I need a helping hand and good suggestions.

But it all amounts to the static observation of my construction design software. Stuck with a portable computer waiting for commands.

I walk into a bar and buy some beer to calm my senses. I look around to catch the attention of the bar owner and some other locals. They are drinking beer with dull faces. Some bad sense of humour make the locals laugh dry laughs.

“Hi.” I say to them, “Can I join you for a game of poker?”

“You surely can.” One of them says to me, “If you tell us about the details of the game.”

“I’ll do it.” I say and walk over to the local’s table.

Well at ease in my hotel room I open a beer can and start to search my mobile phone for messages. I look at one message and read a text from an anonymous source.

“Dial me.” The message says and I do it without thinking.

As I dial the number a female voice greets me in a scrambled tone.

“So you called me at last.” The voice says, “Your days of good fortune is over.” The voice continues, “And it is all about your personal will.”

“What are you talking about?” I ask drunk.

“Your personal will.” The voice says, “That is one thing that is going to change in the future. Your dreams. Your projects. I will see to it that you go down in time.”

The conversation ends abruptly.

I look at the dark shape of my black mobile phone cover. A dead skull is painted upon it. A white skull from some young design artist. Working for some remote company.

“Who could that voice be?” I ask myself.

* * *

I drive out into the desert the next day to open my trunk and take out a shotgun. I put down some beer cans, walk away a bit and shoot at the cans with furious speed. Reloading. Shooting again. And one of the beer cans is hit with a bullet.

It feels needed.

* * *

As events unfold silently I have to adjust to some degree. The hollow looks from the locals are something I have to accept. The dry working conditions, the eerie experience of my construction design software. I sleep a lot. I work morning hours. I work late at night and switch approach as the deadline comes to completion.

The full design is a design that is building on the visions of similar projects along the American homeland. It's not something new. Rather something easily recognizable. Something average to make people recognize the buildings at first display.

“Is this the dream?” I ask myself. “Is this what I was paid for?”

Not much more can be said or be done. I put the final touches on the “grand design”. Laugh a dry laugh and walk out with my portable computer to the construction office.

I have delivered on schedule.

* * *

A week later I'm back in New York to talk with my boss about my latest job and the details concerning my next project.

“You really hit the ground out there!” My boss says. Having a huge grin on his face. Knowing about the perils of my journey.

“I was met with a low-key attitude.” I say to him, “The customer really wanted something easily recognizable and conventional.”

“It’s easy to understand.” My boss says.

“Yes.” I say to him, “The threatening voice on my mobile phone really bugged me too.”

“It made matters worse for sure!” My boss says, “You need to find some perspective. To value the job you do differently. And even if you do succeed some people will be jealous. Some will hate you too.”

“So what about the next job?” I ask my boss.

“Come with me.” He says to me.

Both of us walk away from the office and sit down along a table in a roof-top restaurant. We drink some wine. We exchange some comments concerning ordinary matters. Talking about the latest adventures of my employer’s kids.

“Here it goes.” My boss says later, “Some people have contacted me regarding a design project for central park here in New York. I need you to take this project very seriously.” He says, “You get to work with a good team of other creative people. Designing something suitable for the park we all share. Are you ready for this?”

I look at my employer with the most exhausted eyes. I try to hide my exhaustion. My numb brain. My disillusioned condition. I try to project some good-will and also a winning smile.

“This is a good chance for sure.” I say to him. “I’m on to it.”

* * *

It's peculiar how a change of scenery can make wonders for the wandering brain. I'm introduced to the creative team responsible for the "grand design" of the central park installation.

We walk the park like occasional tourists. Watching the casual walk patterns of the locals. Some of them walk an easy walk and others walk more upright with a certain strain.

"So you're pretty accustomed to these kind of projects?" One woman asks me with a keen sense of curiosity.

"I'm experienced." I say to hide my background a bit, " But it's also a great opportunity."

"I think so too." The woman says.

The team of designers join together in an office pretty close to the Empire State Building. We share some drinks with low alcohol percentage. The new situation is a great contrast to the lonely business along the American highway. Gone are the dusty roads. The yellow desert and the blazing sun.

The loneliness.

We join together for a presentation of the ideas for the central park project. Some of us abandon the portable computers for a whiteboard in one corner of the office.

We drag lines and connections between different concepts and ideas. We forget the hard details of the project and start to focus on the basics. The big strokes knows no limits in this early phase. We make our common voices heard.

We also make creative leaps without harsh judgments.

"Ok." One of the designers says to the rest of us. "As we pass the first phase of the design procedure we have to concentrate more on the necessities. The details. The juicy details."

I listen to the man. His creative temper. His happy outlook of a cutting edge designer working for a large company. He has made

himself push beyond ordinary states of consciousness. His comments regarding the project are pretty impressive coming from such a young man. But I don't see him as a superior. Instead I challenge him. I ask him pretty rare questions regarding the project design. I'm not afraid to astound myself concerning the questions I ask him.

The day ends with a well sought after pub round. With a celebration of creative powers coming from such a well paid team. I lose myself in the moment. The well cherished moment of goal oriented individuals coming together in central New York. I should be grateful. I should be the one to surrender to the creative powers of the team.

But days later I'm caught in a bad mood.

It's hard to describe it. Different talks, different design details. The mix between older and younger people with different genders. It should be an adventure. It should be the defining moment of my career.

But I'm caught silent between the different project designers discussing the details of the project. This happens as I start to see that I'm over-qualified regarding the project at hand. I'm a bit older than the others. I find it easy to put up critique regarding different phases of the project. It should be a rare display of a central park attraction. A miniature replica of different key buildings in the city.

Grand architecture.

In time though I get to see that the talk just is talk to impress colleagues. Pretty average ideas in the end lacking real power. The project becomes something that on the surface is a mind-bending mix of well educated individuals. But in reality just becomes an exercise in good looks, good manners and pretty average ideas.

And one day when I'm walking the New York streets alone at night I'm hit with a heavy pole in the back of my head and lose consciousness.

* * *

I find myself in a room looking like a cell in an abandoned prison. I'm feeling a great pain in my neck. I'm drowsy. Lonely again. Searching for my mobile phone but it's gone.

The pain in my neck is getting worse. I have to lie down on a simple bench to consider the situation. In time I rise to walk up to a single door. But the door is locked from outside.

Dust rats have formed on the floor. A cold and dusty floor having a blue colour.

The voice of heavy steps can be heard from outside.

"Where am I?"

A key can be heard unlocking the door from outside. A woman in black clothing steps inside with a gun in her hand.

"You?" I say to the woman easily recognizable as a prior colleague in the construction design company.

"Yes it's me." The woman says with the name of Iris. "A middle-age woman with blueish eyes lacking any sympathy.

"Why did you do it?" I ask her.

"You remember you stole my position in the construction design company?" She says to me, "It happened contrary to your own attention. But you were always bugging me."

Iris stands upright overshadowing me to make me sit down on the bench. To notice the difference in height between us. She doesn't say much at first. She makes threatening movements with the gun. To push me down on the bench to feel the difference in height between us.

“Let’s put it this way.” Iris says to me, “I know about the teenager dream of your professional pursuits.” She says, “I know about the so called will of your heart. You were fast to never notice me. Fast to never notice the qualified part of my own profession.”

“You were one of the others.” I say to defend myself, “I never saw you as a threat to my own position.”

“You should have done it.” Iris says. “Now the hard part of your professional life has come to the surface.”

Iris lowers the gun.

“The hard part to never fulfil the wish of your employer.” Iris says, “You should never have had any form of will. You should have worked against your initial desires. Used your intellect to other pursuits. And never confronted me to steal my position.” She says, “I will prove this to you in coming times.”

Iris hits me in the head with the pistol and I fall down on the dusty floor like a fallen angel.

* * *

The following weeks passes as a dark nightmare. I constantly hear the voice of Iris echoing in my head. I try to put forward ideas. I’m getting scared due to the imposing threat.

I’m actually released from the empty room. But I can’t focus on my job. I do my best to melt in with the other designers working on the last details of the central park design.

“How are you?” One woman asks me in a friendly tone. She has found out about the crime and actually wants to help me get over it. “Can we help you?”

“Well I’m actually fine!” I say and lie, “It’s only some memory fragments.”

I try to hide my new condition. Hide it as I know that a colleague can be a colleague one time but also an enemy.

The central park installation design completes the following weeks. The team presents a working design that is heralded as a good achievement due to much of my own efforts.

I feel a temporarily sense of victory, of accomplishment. The team walk the central park again with a good temper. The customer (actually the New York commune) say they are pleased with the result and will think about new job opportunities in the future.

I'm put to my own devices. I have to consider my latest efforts. I have to forget the crime. The prospect of a sudden death haunts me in moments. But also, as I witness the result of my professional craft, I come to see that I'm actually an alien in a designer suit.

I wear a suitcase and a portable computer. But I'm just dressing up in a good costume to hide my true emotions.

* * *

I meet my boss a week later to discuss the job I have completed and also to be calmed down concerning the crime I have described to others.

“What does it amount to?” My employer says.

“It amounts to some fear and headaches too.” I say and lie, “But I'm getting over it.”

“You should.” My employer says.

The conversation continues awkwardly from my part. My boss explains new territory. A merging of times. Of the future coming in to current times: “New America”.

An open land of construction opportunities where the technologies of past visionaries have merged with current times and new construction design have changed the reality of the business.

“You will learn this sooner or later.” My employer says.

“I think about getting some vacation.” I say to my boss contrary to personal image, “Is this possible in this situation?”

“Yes.” He says, “Why would I even bother?”

* * *

I'm leaving New York.

I'm on a journey towards a new destination. This journey is a journey towards the heart of the American mainland. Later to Canada, Alaska and small villages passing by in hazy movements.

I have been thinking about the comments from Iris.

Her idea was that I should have worked against my initial desires. My own will. This contra-intuitive thinking of a simple criminal is something I on the one hand can't take as serious but I also sense something terrifying regarding these thoughts coming from within.

That my initial vision, my dream, was leading me into big business but that this business presented violent clashes.

I stop my car alongside a road sign. I open the door of the car, walk away a couple of meters and puke on the ground.

The snow has started to fall. A cold and penetrating feeling of a climate so different from the climate on the American mainland. I'm lost to my own devices. To consider the professional work I have chosen as my last and final pursuit.

As I start to think I go back to the car. I sit down on the driver's seat and put on the radio that is buzzing with a voice upon the buzzing feed. A voice complaining about the state of the world. About crime, about fear and anarchy.

And I sense the reality of my own situation. That I was born with the desire to surpass myself. That I entered big business due to the certain rush concerning the prospect of position, prestige and money. But I never thought deeply about personal concerns. I never thought about the prospect of value creation.

A mind with no desire but to perpetuate its own existence. Creating value in an empty void.

“I can’t think like this.” I say to myself. “I don’t dare to.”

I switch channel on the radio and still hear another complaining voice. A voice on the news. A tale of robbery and murder. About bad working conditions. About a wake-up call for alcoholics and drug addicts.

I’m afraid.

I walk out again to feel the sudden cold of remote Alaska. The freedom. The remote coldness of a continent lost to time.

I later enter empty villages. Remote towns. Ghostly shapes of old people. Never knowing or wanting the stories of a fallen man reverting to something still unknown.

I go back to Canada. I find houses, people, and social gatherings with individuals working their way up the food chain. And I look to it that I pass these individuals in search for an empty cabin. A cabin where I can lay out the details of my own life.

To explore these ideas. Push others aside. To find meaning in an empty void. A void created by the craving mind. Searching for fulfilment in a world ruled by capital interests.

Using intellect to change perspective regarding the profession I have chosen.

Resigning into “atonement”, the reality of the craving soul.

To discover true creative expression.

The Infinite

It’s a futuristic vista. An alien desert passing by underneath us in high speed. It’s a huge desert. A desert where huge segments of yellow sand are intersected with brown pillars of wind-torn cliffs.

Where the howling wind and yellow sand have torn the brown cliffs into imaginative shapes. Almost human figures gazing upon the desert with penetrating looks.

Into frame comes three hover bikes flying in high speed. One of these belongs to a young adult called Angel Night-Crawler. He shares space with two other young adults. One of these is called Nina Three-Eyes, a young woman with a spiky hair-style. The other one is called Neil Time-Twister. They pass a convoy of futuristic rover vehicles. A convoy of industrial looking rover vehicles. Driving upon the sand to create thick dust clouds.

In ore mining valleys huge tractors work restlessly to dig into the sand. Giving room for drilling equipment.

The young adults have finally arrived at their home planet. A massive space-ship has established an orbit above the atmosphere. A space-ship used to travel outer space contrary to average expectations.

“Home at last.” Angel Night-Crawler says to the others, “It feels like a past life-time! An odd occurrence.”

The youngsters slow down speed to enter a huge gorge. A gorge where human civilization flourish to decorate the walls of the gorge with futuristic buildings. Walking platforms and bridges connect the two sides of the gorge with each other.

The gorge is so enormous that it’s hard to see the end of it with normal vision. The sides of the gorge protect humans from alien winds. It’s like a complete civilization built on an escape from natural disasters.

The young adults slow down a bit to discover restaurants and futuristic item stores along the sides of the gorge. They land their hover bikes on a platform extending from the side of the gorge to make the youngsters remember.

“It’s not like yesterday.” Angel says to the others, “But I still recognize this place.”

“Me too.” Neil Time-Twister says.

When the youngsters arrive inside a building they get to see that some details have remained intact and others have changed. A wall inside the building displays images from new excavations. It’s images with torn shapes of human colonists. Older people and younger ones too.

They are complaining about the current state of affairs. But they hint that this work is also necessary. Necessary to counteract the unrestrained dimensions of the afterlife.

“How strange.” Nina Three-Eyes says to the others. Removing her space-helmet to display the greasy spikes of her blonde hair. “This idea of the afterlife is very odd.” Nina says, “That people now search for some kind of limitation.”

“It has to be investigated.” Angel Night-Crawler says.

The young adults have to ease down to find some time of sleep. The adventurous journey into the depths of space has made them strong and full of vitality. But they still are pretty exhausted.

They enter a futuristic hotel with several rooms. Tables twist and turn to create sleeping spaces. It’s a comfortable vision of alternating furniture. Even the images on the paintings change.

The young adults instantly stop to stare at black shapes in one corner of the room. The shapes are connecting to each other in a web of alien origin. Building patterns with mathematical precision. Looking a bit like something from the aquatic kingdom but still fit for the dry environment on the planetary land.

“What about the black shapes?” Angel asks a porter.

“It’s the new government!” The porter says to Angel, “Haven’t you heard?” He says, “It’s about the necessity of current times!”

* * *

Neil, Angel and Nina walk together over a bridge to the other side of the gorge. They have heard stories about a new cave entrance. Leading to a huge cave pattern descending down into the brown rock.

They find the entrance to the cave. Inside the cave they are struck by the alien presence. The human element of futuristic design is mixed with an aura of otherness. This is visible in technology such as elevators, air support units and water piping. The area contains multiple support lines regarding these kind of technologies.

The youngsters walk up to a magenta liquid container. Cut in organic design containing liquid for the alien species. And hybrids, mixed with alien and human D.N.A, walk the shared ground wearing space-suits and human air support.

The young adults find themselves staring into the magenta liquid. Watching a huge alien shape slowly move under the surface. The alien cave shaft is huge. Stretching for thousands of meters into the brown rock. Water is dripping from the upper levels of the cave.

Above the young adults human shapes are working with some kind of drilling operation. To widen the cave. To build another form of alien support unit.

“Hi.” A man says to Angel Night-Crawler that has seen the young adult’s colourful shape. “Are you a visitor?”

“I was born on this planet.” Angel Night-Crawler says, “But what about this? Why are you working for an alien species?”

“It’s about the limitation.” He says, “As times were too easy before. We need the experience.”

“Are you serious?” Angel asks to the man. “This work is madness from my point of view!”

“How come?”

“Because you’re just exhausted!” Angel says, “Complaints can be heard from almost everyone! And you’re not feeling anything of importance!”

The man stares at Angel in silence.

Neil and Nina push Angel aside to make him walk away from the humans and the hybrids. The situation seems threatening.

Mysterious. Confusing. They take Angel aside to talk with him in soft tone regarding the working operations.

Nina says they travelled the depths of space to find a way to live differently. They saw the wonders of human colonization. And other worlds beyond those. They found a sense of adventure and true happiness. But never had they seen such madness! Such a mad descent into work and routine!

Just for limitation.

“I think it’s time to start to think about our accomplishments.”

Angel says to Nina in a serious tone, “We found subjective knowledge and true happiness but we took it for granted.”

“You have a point.” Nina says.

“Here is how I see it:” Neil Time-Twister says, “We went away in a time where different currents were blowing in the air. The human colonization project was just coming to completion. And we disappeared without a trace before everything degenerated into law and order.”

“So we came to see another reality than the others?” Angel asks.

“Pretty much so.” Neil says.

Suddenly an alien hybrid takes hold of Nina in a strong movement. The hybrid holds her steady in his arms. Angel watches it and takes up a futuristic ray gun. He shoots a beam towards the alien hybrid that loses his grip. Nina runs for the cave entrance. The others run after her. A horde of alien hybrids run

after the young adults. Taking up weapons to shoot after the human shapes that take shelter beyond human air support units.

“It’s madness!” Angel screams at the alien hybrids. “To create temporary suffering for a stupid end!”

Three alien hybrids approach the young adults from the side. Rolling on the ground to escape the beams from Angel’s ray gun. Nina and Neil take up ray guns too. And start to shoot at the alien hybrids. With faces half-human, half alien.

Blackened faces with human flesh in between. Their eyes staring into darkness.

“Why did you do it?” Angel screams to the alien hybrids, “Why did you enslave human beings?”

“It’s about the everlasting problem of the multi-verse!” They scream in a high-pitched vibration, “About a loss of meaning due to simplicity! We came from the ocean. From the bottomless abyss of the ocean. To establish the prospect of a new future.”

“But it’s just about madness in the end!” Angel screams.

The humans in the cave are listening. But there is no answer.

The youngsters run out of the cave towards their hover bikes. They jump up on the bikes. Start the jet propulsion engines and fly away from the closest area. They are shot at with sentry guns.

Neil is hit and descends towards the bottom of the gorge. Where the hover bike hits fire and consumes Neil in flames.

Angel and Nina continue to the end of the gorge. Where they are met with a vista of a magenta ocean. Huge waves crash up towards the cliffs in majestic movements.

“Do you see the island beyond the coastline?” Angel asks Nina over the radio. “We have to escape.”

* * *

The two survivors try to contact Neil over the radio but can't establish a connection. They have to assume Neil is dead and they take to the remote island to escape the threat of the hybrids.

On the island they find shelter between a couple of cliffs where they call down the space-ship from orbit. They sit silently upon the brown rock to watch ripples upon the ocean.

Circular motion caused by opposing layers of alien liquid.

"We need to enter the astral planes to search for Neil's soul in the afterlife." Nina says to Angel.

"I agree." Angel says.

Half an hour later the huge space-ship descends from the starry skies. It's glimmering with night-time reflections. To a background of several moons coloured in grey.

On the ground the two space-travellers enter the space-ship to walk right up to the sleeping modules. They lie down, close their eyes and project their consciousness to dimensions beyond the physical. It's a procedure that demands good time and concentration.

To concentrate on the real-time zone on the astral plane. Where they eventually get to meet Neil once again.

"I died." Neil says to the others on the astral plane, "And time passes quickly in the real-time zone. I know you would come for me." Neil says, "But I have already found my home in the astral."

"Can you show us your home?" Nina Three-Eyes asks.

"Off course." Neil Time-Twister says.

The young adults are taken to a paradise environment. A lush mountain region where a huge mountain overlooks Neil Time-Twister's home in the afterlife. The mountain looks down upon him with a look reminding the others about Neil's own face.

Actually it's a copy.

Neil has become something of a god in this non-physical dimension. He has a house, helpers and local water-supply. The water contains shapes that look upon him with keen curiosity. And also praise Neil due to his countless victories and defeats.

“There is a problem here though.” Neil says to the others.

“What problem?” Nina asks Neil.

“The problem of no problems!” Neil says. “I have everything taken care of! I have my water supply, my food, my sleeping unit and also countless pleasures.”

“So you mean the hybrids were right?”

“Far from it!” Neil says, “This is just a different environment.”

Nina listens but is disturbed by a beating clock on the physical plane. She exits the astral projection and wakes up in the physical with some headache.

Angel follows her.

* * *

The following weeks the two remaining survivors talk about their past experiences on the astral plane. They remind themselves they were avid astral travellers in the past. As Neil said the problem on the astral plane is that the entities living there actually have it too easy. They are not challenged by hard living conditions.

Some things are pretty similar though. Most people have ordinary jobs but these jobs are jobs they have chosen due to their past occupations on the physical plane. There is money. A certain money flow. But most individuals have what they need for a safe journey home.

“Now things get interesting.” Angel says to Nina, “It seems the inhabitants on the astral planes have the opposite problem compared with people on the physical plane. There is suffering. But a suffering of a different kind.”

“I agree.” Nina says. “But what can one do about it? As most enlightened teachers says: The problem with the infinite is that everything already is done.”

The two travellers end their conversation to focus on matters in the physical. There is a huge population on the planet that is enslaved in the most horrid ways. And they also come to think about a problem they never have thought about earlier.

The fact was that Neil’s hover bike contained an energy module that is needed for a safe journey to outer space. The inhabitants on the planet would be hard to convince regarding the life they have chosen. So they have to enter the zone of the gorge late at night. To find the remains of Neil’s hover bike and extract the energy module from it.

“We leave for the gorge tomorrow night.” Nina says.

The journey happens at intended. They leave a starry night where the grey moons above the horizon send their grey reflections upon the swirling water. Later, as the young adults enter the gorge with cloaked lights, they start to search the bottom of the gorge for Neil’s hover bike. They find it after some detective work. They isolate the fragments of the bike and find the energy cube in a safe box close to the burned remains of Neil’s body.

But to their own horror they are soon detected by human shapes coming out of several buildings.

“We’re just leaving.” Angel says to a woman with shining eyes.

“Why leave?” The woman asks Angel in somber tone.

“To not disturb the aliens.” Angel says.

“You don’t have to go.” The woman says, “The aliens are gone.”

“Why gone?” Angel asks.

“Due to the impression you made on the workers.”

Angel is surprised.

To make a long story short the people noticed the arguments made concerning Angel's opposing views. The people never wanted to work in the first place. They were easily convinced by the young adults as they always held the same views subconsciously.

They just listened to the alien species due to their own arguments.

People took for granted they had to work hard as they always had done in the past. The alien rulers just used this mind-set (common-sense reality) to convince the colonists they had to abandon their own comfort for greater meaning.

Angel and Nina are introduced to the new life of the colonists. The aliens went away a week ago. They did it without complaint as they only did what they did for the people.

Not the other way around.

Now Angel and Nina are invited to a party. A party along the gorge in futuristic buildings.

* * *

Angel and Nina leave later towards unknown horizons. They exit the atmosphere with the space-ship and a sound of thunder echoes below.

"What about the afterlife then?" Nina asks Angel Night-Crawler in a serious tone. "All hard tasks on the physical plane have come and gone." She says, "What about the afterlife?"

"We need to change approach to the afterlife." Angel says, "It must contain more than nice diversions." He says, "Some kind of mission where we can indulge in true passions. Reverting the philosophy of ease and calm and do something hard for a change."

"Changing the approach of the afterlife?"

"Yes." Angel says, "We need to take it easy on the physical plane but we also need to make things harder on the astral plane." He says, "To work hard for the benefit of our own future. Not limited

to concepts of 'infinity' but work harder in time for absolute freedom.”

“What freedom?”

“The freedom to indulge beyond all so called concepts of infinity and actually explore new concepts, new places and entities. And not just explore but to create consciously. To find the subtle details of the infinite form of the multi-verse. Creating for change.”

“You might be right.” Nina Three-Eyes says to Angel Night-Crawler, “The Infinite is also unknown in origin.”

Adaptation

This post-apocalyptic story is about a man that went beyond the earth to a destiny among the outer planets. He grew beyond young age but became disqualified for a position in this high-tech environment. He had to return to the earth.

Seventy years had passed. The earth was not looking the same as before. New species of rats (almost looking like mice) crowded the open areas. And a new species of crows circulated the grey buildings. With a hint of brown.

They were not looking the same. The old man was trying to make a living in this post-apocalyptic environment. Strange evolutionary forces adapted to a planet devoid of original environments.

But in a sense it was the same: The trees, the pale grass and other natural occurrences shared space with new species of animals evolving in a new atmosphere.

Grey and dull due to prior environmental disasters.

The man introduced himself to a few humans left on this polluted earth. They had used nanotechnology to make their breathing tolerate the new gases introduced in the earth atmosphere.

And to eat food that was partly augmented rests from another past.

He got to know the humans but they were simple minded. Badly educated about complex language structures. Lacking advanced concepts known on the outer planets in the solar system.

The earth had become a prison: A prison of the body, mind and soul.

The man dreamt broken dreams concerning his past life in outer space. That it had higher intellectual value. A species of space-men that could predict and prevent disasters.

And it wasn't looking the same.

The man got to try new technology transporting him below the earth surface in long tunnels of grey. Where transport lines divided the traffic in three lanes. Partly absent from traffic.

He had a meal at a restaurant serving meat from the evolving species seen on the surface. In effect rats getting smaller like mice and lacking culinary value.

Days later the man got sick from this food and was taken to an underground hospital.

Here he was introduced to future medicine. And he realized he had to transplant organs to be able to digest the new food without problems. He had to become another human. To learn a new language. And adapt to a life as a worker somewhere upon the earth surface.

A police man.

The man (called Evan) was left lying on his bed for a couple of weeks but he had to leave the hospital pretty early due to lack of

funds for these survivor resources. It was a post-apocalyptic scenario.

Still it was humans left on earth.

The man was introduced to his work as a police man. A profession he tried to avoid on the outer planets. He was introduced to it. But a malfunctioning stomach and disorientation concerning the new environments had made him grow weaker.

He was put on a short vacation. During this time he had to school himself in procedures and policy concerning the future police force creating order on post-apocalyptic earth.

Weeks later he was out there. Trying weapons. Driving along other police men taking care of civil life in the mode of tuff combat units. He was putting criminals to rest.

Pretty soon Evan got to realize he was a victim of criminal syndicates living under the earth surface. Restless warriors paying their due on an earth looking more pleasant under the surface than above the surface.

Puzzling indeed.

As the story developed he was getting more experience as a police man on a post-apocalyptic earth. He had to adapt and occasionally started to try conversations with other police men. Especially a woman standing out from the others. With a dull face but with a hint of a spark in her blue eyes.

It was revealed that this woman couldn't understand abstract reasoning at depth. She couldn't understand the man's ideas from a higher perspective. To her fighting criminals was a good thing. And a torment to her fragile condition. But she couldn't understand an escape from these ordinary matters.

Never schooled in a language fit for abstract reasoning.

It turned out that Evan was pulled out on another mission. Beyond future America to Russia in a black helicopter. There it was revealed that the original environments were preserved. They were

almost looking like they always had. And Evan's team had to land in a wildlife area. With slim bears, patterned lynxes and striped wolfs lusting for blood. Never evolved to understand the danger of human threats.

The mission was to locate the burying ground of old Russian police to dig for police equipment that some leaders thought would be important from a technological perspective. To fight criminals in a future where technology had degenerated into simple combat equipment. Lacking the fire power of the past.

They were for themselves in the Russian landscape. They watched the surroundings like space-men confronting an alien land. Walked for miles upon a snowy trail where the original sounds of Russia made Evan twist in recognition.

They saw balls of fur left from evolving animals. And they were walking a stiff walk upon snowy ground. Evan thought that the new earth was a nightmare. But these preserved regions were too distant from his adapted condition.

The team lost coordination. The police men ran desperately in the cold. And finally got hunted by a group of striped wolfs. The team emptied their guns with future ammunition against these rugged beasts that had evolved huge canines and claws resembling prehistorical body shifts. Projected their simple weapons against the beasts that leapt like striped ghosts in the night.

Some of the police men died. Some of them fell to the ground to be eaten alive by the strange beasts.

Finally the police force entered the burying ground of the previous clan of Russians. That saw the collapse of western civilization. And some of the weapons looked similar to ordinary guns as of before the abandoning of earth for outer space.

Evan tried to talk to the others about the animal threat. The cold. The wilderness. A preserved area of Russia where technology had

another standard. Even a hint of futuristic ray guns that emerged before the abandoning of old earth.

The other police men couldn't understand Evan. They were schooled in a future deviance of language lacking high abstract reasoning and complex structures.

"Why do you say this?" One of the police-men asked Evan. He was a grey bearded man with a desperate look. Pretty starved. Thirsty from the forest path leading to the burial ground.

"I say we have to think of other options!" Evan said aloud, "I also say that the water found in this place is alien to your own bodies. You have to think of other options."

The man stared blankly into Evan's alien eyes. And he was getting frustrated and full of contradictory thoughts.

Months later Evan was continuing on his path as a police man in an elevated position above the ground. This was a high area on a mountain top in future Colorado.

He watched gangs of low-life drive three-wheeled choppers on the streets below the mountain. He was using a binocular. A binocular found in the forest region in Russia. Old technology not understood by the humans in these times.

It was a strange occurrence.

The man looked at the signs and came to see that the future world was trying to survive contrary to logic. Language had degenerated to a practical and limited field of vision. So alien from the outer planets it was like an astronomical distance.

A process of decay happened faster for every day from Evan's perspective. But it was a perspective not understood by future society.

Russia with species of slim bears, patterned lynxes and striped wolfs was hardened and unfit for future man. Even the old humans before the colonization of the other planets. These men were used

to animals frightened of humans in a modern world. Those beasts were only schooled in the art of killing.

Evan thought: *“In one point of time man was a man, then he became an over-man and then degenerated into a child.”*

The women Evan met couldn't understand him. Couldn't communicate. Couldn't understand abstract thoughts and elevated emotions.

Evan was trapped. Tried to adjust but came to think about the outer planets. The evolving spiral towards good fortune. A blessing for space-men dressed in white suits.

He had a darkly ironic laughter.

Realized: *“True adaptation was not only about changing shape and physical composure. It was about a fluid mind. The will to adapt to strange circumstances. Confronting the fear of the unknown. Adapting to a world contrary to human nature.”*

It was not a world intended for man.

A bleak and horrific death: Death to old values, customs and original environments.

Something to preserve for space-men on other planets.

Not for him. Not for his certain destiny upon a grey earth with different surrounding areas.

Leading to resignation.