

# STATIC

A short science-fiction story by Andreas Ingo

Up upon the towering mesa but beneath the clouds the information technology model “Ravel” (model number “IT-423-i”) built for information technology tasks but having a well-grown human shape with the body of an athlete scanned the environment leading north-west from the current point along the planetary surface. He was not only an information-technology expert with a good temper but also had a leading role in his own department. A humane approach to leadership from the start. Not chief but rather an information technology expert that had a say in how the flow of work manifested itself over time.

The scan of the planetary surface was made using artificial eyes he had bought in a commercial district on a mother-ship before the actual space mission took off to the planet (The planet was called “Levitate” due to the possibilities found here) and using a digital zoom he could make out some details seen from his point on the mesa with the company of two other cybernetic models. One of these models was a young woman around twenty years old a little bit shorter than himself and using a shell with organic skin but also with a high-tech core within. She was slender, blending red and white skin almost having a pink skin that was brighter in some facial areas. In some areas, such as on the head, the cybernetic quality of the model “Eureka” was made visible. Such as a communication device connecting to the ears with a small antenna on top of the head. It was a short antenna with a soft look sometimes used for wireless networks inside the home base. It could be disconnected from the head at sleep time. She was wearing a slim space suit with a shiny blue colour but she didn’t have an oxygen supply. The other model “Anticipation” was a male figure with the same organic shell as the girl but with a male head. The facial expression on his face was pretty much happy and energetic. His facial colour almost bent to green.

He had cybernetic eye implants.

Kilometers away beneath a pink sky with orange cloud formations a swamp could be detected using the digital zoom of Ravel’s eyes. The swamp was gray with a brown surrounding area with a moistly quality. Connecting to a surrounding desert. Standing in rigid motion an alien being seven meters high was standing in the swamp surrounded by human colonizers with shelled rovers. It was a kind of gigantic parasite reminding of a fantasy troll living on something in the mud of the swamp. Huge tentacles moved in the air as in a calm breeze for reasons unknown. The two other cyborgs Eureka and Anticipation let their artificial sight sweep along the planetary surface as a question was put forward by Ravel.

“Can you see the rigid shape in the distance?” Ravel asked the others (thinking about the alien shape).

“I can see it.” Eureka answered but the comment was made concerning a protruding cliff formation close to the swamp.

As Ravel talked with the younger models (worker models WRK-51-i and WRK-57-iv) Ravel saw his mistake after additional questions and answers. This had happened many times before this one as it was one thing to *see* something and another thing to *communicate* it. Due to limitations of language and perception. In fact it was entirely possible to talk about one thing for fifteen minutes and totally miss the point out here on the mesa. Ravel searched for additional clues as to why the creature was standing still with so many humans surrounding him.

“It is a rock!” Eureka exclaimed with irony.

Further scans of the planetary environment revealed strange alien creatures resembling motorcycle wheels with organic shapes with sucking mechanisms in the centre of their circular bodies. They were not looking like actual wheels of motorcycles. But the shapes were round in part. They had a pale colour with organic deviations hinting at the visuals of ghosts. With strange nostrils running from the centre of their bodies and oscillating in the air.

Being pale.

The male cyborg “Anticipation” locked his artificial eyes upon one of the ghostly shapes as it started to move in circular motion in an attempt to roll the body around as a rolling wheel in the wild terrain. It could not find its composure right from the start. It rather pushed itself in many directions to finally find balance in between extreme thrust and low energy.

Flashes of lightning erupted in the orange clouds lit by a sun with average size. A picturesque work of electricity creating arcs of white light between clouds building a symmetry almost looking like a glowing spiders-web flashing.

The three cyborgs took in the full scenery presented before them. Away to the north-east the majestic shape of their home base was seen. It was a futuristic vision mostly in white, with ghostly green modules in part and large sections built in blue glass where the reflections of the sun created glowing spots. It looked like a glowing high-tech temple sometimes golden. Surrounded by a kind of garden in violet. Some towers with communication devices and sun panels were also seen.

An armada of colony workers were coming out of the base. Led by a huge truck running on tracks the cyborgs were surrounding it. The truck was silvery and reflective. A huge monster built with the intention to threaten invaders. The truck was also supported by motorbikes running on smaller tracks.

“What to expect this day?” Ravel asked the others.

“We have been out for three days.” Eureka said, “It is pretty absurd to make science concerning the colonization like we do. I mean we are not real scientists!” She said, “But when it comes down to it we don’t have much free time.”

“We also don’t know if prior science lessons really hit the mark.” Ravel said.

Anticipation let his artificial sight move across the landscape and away in the far distance he watched a dust cloud in rust red colour but the details of the phenomena could not be seen in great detail. The horizon, made up of a darkly brown wall of a mountain range, was bleeding together with the dust cloud. A strange hazy cloud line above the mountain range diving into the desert made it even more difficult to make out details. It was hard to separate the swirling dust cloud sometimes revealing small shapes in black from the surroundings.

“Look at the dust cloud.” Anticipation said to Ravel, “What happens there?”

Ravel zoomed in on the dust cloud. As he did this the entirety of the alien panorama made an imprint upon the light sensitive plate on his artificial eyes. The digital zoom of his eyes was not up to the task. It was future technology with limitations. Still this was Ravel’s actual eyes. Ravel didn’t know everything about the colony first hand. Ravel concluded the sight could be colonizers building roads pushing dust into the air not related to their own tasks on this world.

“What we have seen is pretty common.” Eureka said, “What entirely new can really be found on a rock like this?”

“People are moving out.” Ravel said, “Moving out building roads, establishing new bases and encountering some resistance from the local wild life. Life goes on. Life reveals itself due to actions put on the shoulders of average cyborgs. The atmospheric conditions have to be about the worst compared to the rest. But what about the truth of this place?” Ravel asked, “Is this it?”

“It does not feel exactly as in the science articles presented to me from my own perspective. It rather feels like a read in a digital pulp magazine. With moving images. We are in fact standing on a towering mesa rarely visited.” Eureka said, “I also wonder about the wheeled aliens. How anything like that can live. Something I never was instructed about on home-world for sure.”