

# ADAPTATION

A POST-APOCALYPTIC NOVEL BY ANDREAS INGO

1

## BACK ON EARTH

*He went beyond the earth to Neptune to indulge in the future life of its largest moon 2155 A.D. But his intellectual capacity proved to lack in certain areas. He was disqualified as a citizen on this world.*

*He had to return to the earth.*

The star-ship lander descended upon flattened ground on a space-port suitable for space-flight. As Raymond descended upon the flat surface he started to see grey buildings in the distance.

He took a space-port bus to the complex. It was a threatening feeling in the air: A cold temperature, a howling wind and also trash cans along the way. Some other space-travellers sat along him on simple benches. Not many of them were talking. Their faces were dull, torn, exhausted from the long space-flight. And Raymond just knew (His last name was Atman) that most of them shared his destiny.

It was the look of them. The loss of a long sought dream. To live on the largest moon of Neptune with welfare benefits.

Raymond picked up his baggage at a baggage return conveyor belt. And he checked his baggage for lost items. A toothbrush, a shaving machine, some clothes, an alarm clock and many other items were found inside. Nothing was missing. And he watched the baggage return hall to see posters depicting different space-flights. Flights to the moons of Jupiter, a Mercury tourist path and many other options.

The people were dull and grey. The white light from the ceiling armatures were sometimes blinking.

He decided that he needed to stay at the complex for the night. He was also checked by security personnel. It was revealed he had to conduct medical checks. Checks for bacteria and a general health control. He had to take

some fluids against Neptune bacteria. Medicine to keep for the future as the earth also had the dangers of new deceases.

The night were spent in a small room containing sleeping units with a shared space for several travellers. The night was uncomfortable as Raymond had to endure the snoring of other travellers. He had a comfortable pillow though. A clean blanket and the sense of relative security. He looked at the ceiling to watch spiders that crept around with flies close to the ceiling armature.

It was a chock to Raymond's spoiled senses.

The next day was a dull day where the sunlight sent beams of light through thick clouds. Snow was fallen on the ground. The bus to the nearest city moved along at slow speed.

The city was a city Raymond was allowed to enter due to a written contract at the space-port.

As the bus moved along and low voices could be heard from other travellers Raymond started to see wildlife walking along the snowy road. A specimen of Deer that didn't look like the Deer of his youth. The specimen had evolved. Assumed a darker outlook. Almost looking like a mix of Deer and other herbivores from other continents.

This was central Europe.

Raymond entered the European town. The bleak arrival was somewhat enlarged by the look of the city. Not many people were walking around. Certain carnivores of middle-size proportions were seen in places. Police-officers in torn suits wore weapons of early design.

As the bus slowed down Raymond took up a map to check his path to a close-by hotel but he was a little bit confused. Words were different. The descriptions of the city looked a little bit disorienting. As certain road names were left out. Some parts of the city lacked names too. Raymond had to double check the description of the path to the hotel.

The bus stopped.

Raymond walked out along with several others. He questioned some of them for the path to the hotel. But he was met by confused looks and was neglected. Instead Raymond walked inside a grocery store to buy some food and to later talk with the people working there for directions. He soon discovered that the prices for the food were high. That much food looked

rotten. That some new food options were available but he didn't know about those. That the general options for different forms of food were small.

Instead of buying food he walked up to the grocery store personnel and asked them for help. Some of them just looked at him. Then walked the other way. Some of them had some answers to his questions. But in a scrambled language. Raymond had to walk outside for the help from police officers. Pointing his fingers at the name of the hotel.

He was led inside the hotel two hours later.

\* \* \*

Raymond had been an amateur historian. An interest which made him fit to apply to jobs on the largest moon of Neptune earlier. This interest made him a little bit observant to the workings on a nearby restaurant close to the hotel. He ordered a beer but couldn't communicate what he really wanted. He had to take some water instead. Water in a glass that didn't look especially clean. It was also cracked along one of its sides.

He drank the water and started to worry about the supposed deceases that were said to be commonplace on future earth. He took the pills. Used some alcoholic gel to increase his chances for good health. But he started to think it just was wishful thinking.

He ate the food with strain. A blend of protein intake mixed in a bad way. With some better looking parts. Not looking especially delicious. There were no vegetables. No steak. No potatoes. Just a blend of different protein food sources.

As Raymond started to feel a bit dizzy due to the new situation. With all bleak impressions, with the middle-size carnivores on the street, police officers walking along with old weapons, he realized he had been exposed to new bacteria. His stomach started to make noises. He went to the men's room and found a place full of trash and the mark of filth on the floor.

"Bad luck." Raymond thought to himself.

\* \* \*

The following days were days with the making of a diary. Raymond Atman had to be escorted to a hospital. It was a hospital lying underground in a tunnel complex where low-life were seen along the main road. Some of them looked haggard, starved, angry. But some of them (and there were a

few in between) were playing along. Adjusted to the harsh living conditions of post-apocalyptic earth.

The ambulance escort moved in between layers of future roads. Passing marked driving lanes. Passing trucks. Passing smaller cars. Lit by light configurations in sections. Like future signs of other times. Also chopper bikes with new propulsion engines that pulled their weight along the underground complex at morning.

When Raymond's ambulance arrived at the hospital he was carried out. Was escorted into the interior of a underground building that almost looked like a future science centre. The occasional glassed rooms were seen with clerks. Medical personnel were moving around quite stressed checking their watches. Constant alarms were heard from other units.

Raymond was checked with medical equipment. Where the sick man noticed some of the medics had talks in a modified version of German language. Contrary to the traces of English language the police officers had used. He couldn't understand them.

Raymond was put in a hospital bed. There he exchanged some sentences with medical personnel. In German. But it was revealed not many could understand him. He picked up some words of English. Some Danish. Tried to formulate simple sentences but both parts of the conversation were kept in the dark.

Raymond started to look at the hospital environment for clues as to what place he had entered.

It was a bright environment. Other patients were lying on other hospital beds. They were having food at times. Better than the food at the restaurant in parts. With vegetables even. With meat. With potatoes. Having a taste of something from old earth. They got more injections of mysterious fluids. It could have been penicillin but Raymond didn't know for sure. He had a water supply. An alarm button for additional medical support. And also new clothing fit for his hospital stay.

Before he went to sleep he noticed a teenager boy with a happy face. Heard traces of sentences coming from a nearby radio. The radio voice talked about the dangers of the coming times. With a feverish temperament. That something had gone wrong with the new government policy. That people living beyond earth had it better than people living on earth.

The days in the hospital bed passed in a hazy blur. A conversation was had with medical personnel. They talked about his welfare program contract. His rights. Looking for money. They had some jokes too. They were joking along in a variant of German. Raymond picked up some words. Heard some laughs. Still his stomach felt worse.

A couple of days later the teenager boy with the happy face went up to Raymond's bed. The boy said something about his health and also concerning human destiny. About the talk on the radio.

That the earth was up for a change of times. That change was needed. The teenager boy presented himself as Henrique Alastair, said that the people on earth were starving, put his decease in perspective and gave Raymond a handshake and good wishes for the future.

It was quite surprising.

## 2

### A NEW JOB OPPORTUNITY

Raymond had returned from the hospital and the credits were coming low. His future stranded on post-apocalyptic earth was a sad journey into the limits of his physical powers. But according to law he was offered a job (this was due to global solar system policy) as a police officer. Walking the streets of the European town. Watching the middle-size carnivores display a dangerous threat to civilian life.

Raymond later realized this town was part of future Germany.

He had to enter a school for police officers. Learning to handle the different weapons. Learn law and routine. To protect the civilians from the animal threat and to counteract organized crime syndicates living under the earth surface. Among other things.

What happened though was that he came to see that the police officers didn't do anything of importance. It was rather a thing of the written word and oral discourse. And he couldn't make himself understood at depth. He had to learn more German. And the most peculiar thing was that most police officers weren't schooled more than him.

It was a thing of common display.

On one of his patrolling missions he came to work closely with a female police officer using handguns instead of weapons with higher calibre. She said to him in bad German: "You are new to this thing aren't you?" "New in a way." Raymond said, "But I was drilled for police missions close to Neptune." "What?" The female police officer asked and then the conversation ended abruptly.

The female police officer (Called Candy Lei) was silent for the rest of the patrol mission. Small children, using gas protection units for the bad air, walked past the two officers. They didn't have happy expressions on their faces. Rather wandering, sometimes more wilful, around the street corners of the snowy neighbourhood. Sometimes enlarged crows made the children company on the ground. Eating rests from meat left over from the middle-sized carnivores. Human flesh. The beasts were striped in beige colour melting together with the German town.

"So what do you do in free-time?" Raymond asked Candy.

"Free-time?"

"Yes." Raymond said in bad German, "The time after work."

"I look after my pets." Candy said. And as she said this something sad was seen in her eyes. But also a hint of an inner spark when she later talked about clothing, food and shelter.

She existed in a simple world indeed.

The days went on like this. Nothing happened. Not many civilians dared to walk the cluttered streets. Sometimes earth rover vehicles went over the snowy ground. It started raining some warmer days. The muddy streets of snow and newly fallen rain were becoming hard to endure.

Raymond had to carry a large load of bags carried on his back. For occasional service to sick and dying civilians. A rescue kit. And sometimes he also had to use his weapons on suspected criminals. That sometimes went past him on motorcycles.

But he missed them with a large margin.

As Raymond came home he started to think about the things he had heard and seen. And he started to realize he had gone back in time. To pre-historical periods of muddled thinking.

*A death of the mind, body and soul.*

He endured though. Endured due to the fact that he started to get used to the various deceases. His stomach adjusted. He adapted to low key life as he had seen others in the underground parts of the city adapt. Adapting mentality to a world lacking good resources.

It was a trapped condition longing for more but settling.

A change of mental attitude.

### 3

#### A MILITARY OPERATION IN RUSSIA

Certain events in the political environment had made some realize that resources were coming low. That the crime syndicates living under the earth surface had built a large arsenal of weapons for simple reasons. The revelation was the working of espionage on a simple level.

Therefore Raymond and other police officers (not Candy Lei) had to join the military for a joint mission to uncover large weapon deposits in the depths of the Russian wilderness. It was happening in the winter. The snow was falling. Earth rover vehicles and large trucks had been equipped with large fuel containers for the journey into the Russian landscape.

They passed derelict towns where the line of vehicles stopped for a search for left over food deposits. Looking for grain, looking for cold storage of meat and other food supplies. The fact was though that most of these towns lacked good food deposits. As civilization had abandoned earth for outer space in one point of time not much thought had been projected towards the idea of the preservation of future earth people.

The sad destiny of earth was even more fully realized as Raymond had to search these supposed food store units. Many laughed at him as he described that man had gone beyond the earth to other moons and planets in the solar system. The police officers closest to Raymond couldn't understand abstract thinking at depth. The bad German made it worse. Many of the police officers lacked education in global solar system practise.

In an abandoned area close to St. Petersburg the line of military vehicles had to stop for a fallen tree on the road. They had to use available human resources to cut the tree in half and then to move the small pieces aside.

They worked furiously in the cold. As they worked something was seen in the corner of the police officer's eyes. Huge striped wolfs that emerged from a nearby forest among Russian buildings. Trees grown inside the city perimeters. These beasts leapt upon the soldiers, the police officers and Raymond had to use his handgun to counter-act the threat. He was shooting on some, missed others. It was a terrifying inferno of pre-memorial darkness. These beasts had evolved huge jaws. They weren't afraid of humans any longer.

They leapt on the soldiers. Some humans used knives for close encounters. Still many were killed and some police officers ran for the earth rover vehicles to find shelter inside. At one of those moments the huge beasts ran for one of the escapers and tore his jaw at one of the police officers half-way inside. The door were pushed aside by one beige beast and others were coming in to kill the few humans left inside.

Trails of blood on the ground and some spots on the earth rover vehicle were a message of a safe return to other areas of future earth.

A mission required to endure for future earth people.

#### 4

### A SAD HOMECOMING

Raymond had adjusted. He had learned to project his will into the realization that positive thinking made him stronger. More adept to use available resources to build a strong mental attitude. It was a blessing but a blessing that hardly could make him fit to survive in the long run. Government policy (In the sense of *limited* government) had intruded in human affairs to build a limited police force having trouble to cope with the organized crime syndicates living under the earth surface.

He walked the walk in the German town so alien to the Russian wilderness. A forest was still growing inside the town. Some buildings had been smashed by prior conflicts. Bushes in different sorts and sizes were growing inside some of the buildings. A longing for an easy escape tore the civilians down. Living in abandoned houses.

Many died from the present deceases. The hospital was crammed with civilians lost mentally and even weaker physically.



Raymond walked the cluttered streets with carelessness. He had become exhausted as a police officer. The threat of human extinction on earth were increasing. He couldn't listen to the whispers of his heart. At one point of time he could hardly eat anymore. He sat in the room of his small apartment. A small support unit for police officers living on limited funds. As he sat in his bed and his hands started shaking he knew he had to think of new ways. He had to do something. He had to adapt in greater doses or die like so many others.

He discovered the path to his heart.

It was a heart that told him he had to quit the police force. To seek rest in his own apartment or die weeks later. It was something he learned from the huge beasts in Russia. To adapt, to rest. To walk only when necessary. To abandon his prior ideals for the realization of a good nights sleep.

The walls of ignorance were coming down.

He sat up. He shaved his beard. A beard on a fully grown man now in his forties. He looked himself in the mirror. A mirror with a split shape. Split due to prior angers.

Raymond calmed down. He took up a scissor and cut his hair in the right proportions. He went back to bed. Leaned down. As his hands gave up the shakes he was starting to feel better.

Days later his vacation was granted.

The days that followed were almost like a Hollywood movie. He entered the close by restaurant and ordered something new from the options available. He could have steak if he only knew the right words on the menu. A surprise.

Raymond inspected the menu. He thought about it. He could even have potatoes for a relatively high price.

"Is this true for a fact?" Raymond asked the manager in bad German, "I could only order protein support dishes before."

"It is only for those willing to put up the price." The manager said.

"Are you sure?" Raymond asked, "Are you sure you haven't changed the menu?"

"I don't know." The manager said and left.

Raymond was put to his own devices. He started to feel better. Returned to his apartment only to find a letter in his mail box. He opened the letter and it was said that he had to abandon his vacation for new business ahead. The crime syndicates were driving the streets now. With a big arsenal of weapons. Threatening civilian lives with extortion.

“I can’t do it.” Raymond thought.

But later he changed his mind. He had to adapt, he had to do what was necessary to survive the tuff times ahead. A choice he would regret. As the streets of the German city were more dangerous than ever. Raymond escaped the police force with a handgun and some left over credits. To move into a complex of abandoned buildings. Getting fired from his work. Feeling a temporary sense of relief.

As the patrol missions on the city streets would have killed him anyway.

## 5

### RAYMOND’S WAY

The complex of abandoned buildings were built close to the forest surrounding the German city. The man had a great view. A depressing view of untamed forests with hostile life forms. He had seen the light on Neptune’s largest moon. An artificial environment where humans were secure. A security of a false kind though. As he had been sent back to earth years later due to mental limitations.

Now he had to use what resources were available to him to survive. He dug into the kitchen areas of the abandoned buildings. A few stores up and he found not only some left over food but also liquor. He drank the liquor, an old cognac as a celebration of his newly found freedom. But freedom had its price: The price of loneliness.

Also the threat of a mental breakdown.

He found the buildings were cold. They had used electric heat before the breakdown of this area of the city. Some middle-age women walked the streets close to the complex on weak legs. With crying children. The sense of death were tearing upon Raymond’s psyche in moments. He realized he had to seek contact with other people or would surely die.

But it wasn't something easily done in practise. He couldn't move the streets in daytime. The police officers would detect him. He would have to move in the night-time. To use dark pathways and abandoned areas to move beyond his living ground with care to find food, clothing and wood.

Making fires that couldn't be detected by prior colleagues.

How it was made was something Raymond couldn't understand at depth. That the new situation built new threats, new states of consciousness. Tearing upon Raymond psyche but also liberating him. When life was close to the end the human soul gave up all resistance and just went on in an automatic survival response.

Raymond just guessed he had to search for other humans like him. Like the happy teenager boy Raymond met at the hospital. He went for it. Went to the hospital one scary night. To move in support buses to the hospital. To ask the medics for the address for Henrique he met at the hospital earlier. To search the records for the address to this guy.

After a hard conversation Raymond got the address and found himself knocking on the door to the teenager boy's apartment.

He was met by good handshakes. A recognition of the middle-age man at the hospital. How eerie the situation had been. The talk about the process of government policy. The fate of human survival at stake.

And the guessing of a teenager boy wanting survival.

They talked the whole night about the destiny of Raymond, about the government. About the fate of the teenager boy that had seen the errors of humankind with great clarity. It turned out that there existed an abandoned library in the centre of the city. It was a building full of fully grown bushes. Raymond had to enter the library it was said. To learn about human history. How life on earth came to be like it was.

To read, to get the facts at disposal. To inform himself of the state of the world. And in the meantime seek common ground with the teenage boy seeker. To build a relationship built on the concept of mutual survival.

It was something that built hope for the future.

Raymond moved in the night. The traffic in the German city were sparse. Some trucks moved past Raymond's lonely shape and Raymond used a map given to him by Henrique. He went past an open area. A huge town centre were bushes and trees had overgrown the area. Some carnivores had a meal of unknown nature.

The night was cloudy and the threat of snow falling made Raymond wonder what he had decided upon. Still he was walking along. He had a bag on his shoulder. Carrying candles for the purpose of light support in the library. Raymond felt trembles in his knees. He thought about the teenager boy and the sudden realization of temporarily safety. He didn't arrive at the supposed area. He saw torn houses. Some of them with holes in them. He walked along and stopped. Took up a candle and lit it using a lighter. He lit the map with candle light. Started to watch for road signs. Many of them had snow on them. So he walked up to them. Pushed the snow aside. And he started to see he was in the right area after all.

Well inside the library he walked a dusty staircase turning 360 degrees around and ascending. Small rats where running around. Making whimpering noises. And he also saw the shape of a dead rabbit. Having a yellow circle pattern.

Visible in candle light.

The entrance to the main library hall was an area built in sections. In one of those sections Raymond saw two corpses of human nature. Raymond had adjusted to death. Felt that the fact of total annihilation was wired into his psyche. So he could take it like a real man. Raymond sat down at a chair. He put the burning candle on the floor. The floor was dusty and reflecting candle light due to ice crystals.

He searched the stands of books for topics about human history. He went over the German written works for hints of clues as to why civilization had collapsed. He didn't discover much at first. The history lessons taught in these books talked about the evolution of human society. Learning about agriculture, industrialization and at last the information age.

"But humans have deteriorated intellectually!" Raymond thought.

He almost gave up when he opened up a book on Anthropology. The book described how human societies past the information age had seen the rise

of a new world government. This government arose to power due to the decision of world leaders. Democracy was a fact but in time less time was put on educating the masses on the workings of democracy. A true democracy built on freedom, cooperation and knowledge of human history.

And this was important concerning the subject of Raymond's survival. That the system he earlier served didn't serve his own interests. Pure democracy only worked in an enlightened world. In Raymond's world people's intellect were inferior. Built upon bad education.

"How could anyone survive in a system built on lies?" Raymond thought.

Raymond read the same sentences over and over again: "Ordinary humans had gotten their freedom but they just couldn't handle it. Civilization started to deteriorate in a gradual process. Some people went beyond the earth to other planets in the solar system. The uneducated ones had to stay. The corrupt leaders left on earth could fulfil their part."

It was a strange awakening. The more Raymond read the more he started to feel like himself. He had been an amateur historian but he hadn't read anything like this. He had been one of the chosen ones. Still that destiny (On the largest moon on Neptune) was for those adept to use what rarely was presented to increase key points on IQ-tests (among other tests) and therefore get recognition by the global solar system agency.

The night was a horrid awakening. The birth of a new understanding concerning the evolution (and deterioration) of the human race. Connecting to his own destiny. But Raymond was too curious. He read so many texts his mind started to wander. Wander in a random process giving birth to confusion. He realized he had to stop. Just take a deep breath. Sit back in the chair to watch the candle light die away. To sit empty in the darkness. Getting some rest surrounded by warm clothing. A delicate moment of silence interrupted by noises from rats running on the floor.

He realized that his recent freedom didn't have anything to do with wisdom or knowledge. It was about the ego. About pleasure. About the mysterious adventure of walking in intellectual spheres unknown to him. What was said was *important* but even more *the mysterious atmosphere in the library* that made him search himself for knowledge within.

The words resonated inside the depths of his lonely heart.

As morning came an eerie mist surrounded the neighbourhood around the library. Raymond was silent. He saw trucks and motorcycles passing by. Heard the screams of some women. It was like everything had built up to that moment: The realization that man had to endure by himself, for himself, in himself..

But the path out of post-apocalyptic earth seemed hard indeed.

## 7

### TO GIVE UP OR TO CONTINUE

Raymond had to return to his apartment. His floor was cluttered with books he had found at the library. Different topics such as human history, anthropology, alternative medicine and many others. He had found some tobacco in an abandoned house.

One morning a strange bird made him company in his apartment. A kind of chicken like walker that eagerly ate the small portions of food Raymond had kept for himself. It had a long neck different from anything Raymond ever had seen. It also wanted company. A strange gesture different from anything Raymond ever had seen in the animal kingdom.

The tobacco was a blessing. Raymond slept a lot. He used his imagination to dream up possibilities still his moments of doubt made him uncomfortable. The teenager boy had comforted him. So had the agreement between himself and alternative history lessons. But his lonely moments were hard to endure. He used positive thinking to calm his mind. To adjust to loneliness. Finding a sense of comfort coming from within.

Some nights were spent on the roof. He saw different kinds of people walking by. But less so the more time that went by. He suspected he saw the end of civilized life the way he knew it.

A lonely earth rover vehicle later stopped in front of his house as a couple of humans walked out. Uniformed soldiers with weapons. They shouted in bad German and some Danish. Lost in translation from Raymond's part.

They left the rover to walk out of the district.

To his surprise he saw police officers now and then that might suspect the true reason for the different fires Raymond made on the roof. For cooking

and comfort. This was something he learned by inspiration coming from his dreams. Dreams that sometimes became nightmares.

Raymond's money was running out. Not much could be bought at the few remaining grocery stores. The snow had stopped falling but the temperature were coming low. He decided to meet the teenager boy again to discuss the situation.

As this happened Raymond stood shaking in front of the earth rover vehicle with a couple of gasoline tanks in his arms.

"Why continue?" He thought, "Why take this burden upon myself?"

The decision was to continue contrary to logic. It happened not by an analytical process. He could hardly think anymore. His mind was numb from the intellectual burden. He just pushed himself into the unknown by willpower and survival response.

He looked around. Suspicious about patrolling police officers. Pulled gas into the tanks of the rover, pushed the key to the rover (Found inside), started the rover and drove away.

When he arrived at Henrique's apartment it turned out that the door didn't open. Raymond wondered if the boy was dead and he thought about breaking in to assure himself of the answer.

The boy arrived though. He looked a little starved but happy. Pure with the sense of a clear mind. Probably due to intellectual interest.

The boy's apartment had been spoiled with different forms of clothing. With flickering armatures. With a radio going static. A strange parrot was seen on a stick singing tunes imitating the radio.

Raymond and Henrique talked again. They decided to met up with the teenager boy's father. The one figure informing the masses on world events with the help of a radio broadcast.

The broadcast heard on the hospital visit earlier.

When they arrived at the studio the father to the teenager boy (called Tio Alastair) said that not much could be done about the food. They were coming together though. The studio was occupied with stands depicting past warriors. A couple of deviances were seen in how the studio was built. Along with the trash (And that was a big factor!), microphones, radio equipment and stereo receivers occupied different sections.

A huge antenna was seen on the roof when Raymond and Henrique arrived at the studio.

Tio was drinking whisky and said that what made him survive were whisky and radio broadcasts. He drank a lot. He thought deeply. To learn about the secrets of the world small steps at a time.

Some things could be done though. To educate Raymond of his own survival. Even to enter the forest surrounding the city for good hunting. Sleeping in abandoned military installations. Eating some food left over there. The forest region was a bleak area with stumps of fallen trees. With swirling streams formed in different sections due to beaver nests.

A bleak sunshine came shining through the clouds. For water the humans used melted snow. For company they shared their moments of discussions about human history along with a sense of gratitude.

“The Neptune people.” Tio Alastair said, “Could never have guessed some people on earth could become smarter than them.”

It wasn't about solutions. It wasn't about conventional thinking. It was about having a distant goal: To adjust to reality in time and by small doses. To find meaning in life beyond the ideas presented to average citizens.

“But how can one endure?” Raymond asked.

“You can't assume you know what happens later.” Tio said to Raymond, “This lonely endeavour is all about trust in laws discovered by people such as those that wrote the history books.” He said, “We surely can't know if we will die and how happy we can become in the moment. It's about trust. About madness. Enjoying ourselves as long as it lasts.”

“I'll go for it.” Raymond said.

It was a winding path. A decision to give up the will to conform. But it was also a terrifying land. A nightmare. Visits to the nearby forest to learn about adaptation and survival. Learning the wisdom of the pre-memorial beasts.



To abandon the streets. The partly cluttered streets of people of many ages. Giving up the police force. Living as every day were the last.

Raymond had to give up thinking. Taking pauses. Reading a little in between. And he started to see that the path to success was giving up all high ambitions: To read a little, abandon love, abandon intellect.

Taking it up. To push a little further. Eat a little. Enjoy some company. But as time went by and the streets became much less crowded he learned he had to become a survivor.

A survivor because he didn't do like anyone else. He dug into the snow close to the beaver's nests. Cut trees for fires at the roof of the house. He was lost in a terrifying and mysterious land.

A land of new opportunities.

It was here he learned he had to contact Candy Lei in an attempt to give room for another chance of social connection.

But it couldn't happen by conventional methods. Reading up on human history and anthropology had learned him the ways normal people's minds operated in this post-apocalyptic setting. It was about the way they thought. Thinking in linear terms, never abstract. Just about physical things. About the needs of comfort and survival.

He met Candy Lei on one of her patrol missions.

She was still alive. Raymond said that he had to abandon the police life for a life outside the law. A law that was crumbling due to the organized crime syndicates. It was a land of many dangers and dead ends.

"Come join me." He said. "There is one thing you don't understand."

"What is that?" Candy Lei said with surprise.

"That you seek food and shelter and I can see to it that you get what you want in time."

"An apartment?"

"An apartment and also good food collected from wildlife regions."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes." Raymond said, "What you need is security and a good future. I have pets too."

The female police officer looked at Raymond with the most suspicious eyes. She couldn't believe in another life. A life different from the life in her profession. But she understood the crime waves were increasing. She saw their power every day. And one thing was also clear: That her pay was getting taken from her. That she couldn't buy clothing. And she missed her companion from earlier times.

"I tried to talk to you earlier but I missed something about the conversation. That it just looked bad on the surface. That I said too much."

"How come?"

"It was due to my historic perspective." Raymond said, "My deep analysis."

"What?" Candy Lei said.

"Just forget about it." Raymond said.

The two of them talked a little more. Walked past suspicious people driving choppers.

They had the weapons. Fighting was felt in the air.

"I'll go for it." Candy Lei said.

## 9

### FUTURE TIMES

They were out now. In the forests of the German heritage. The space-men had abandoned earth for good. The space travel trajectories to other parts of the universe had ended.

The organized crime syndicates had taken over human affairs. It was due to misconduct in the government sphere. It was no real government. Just different crime syndicates battling each other.

There came other times. Times in the German forests with a lush vegetation and the sight of a full moon. The two police officers married. A hedonistic marriage built on willpower. On mutual trust. But they didn't bring any kids.

They sat together. They collected their thoughts.

As they did it they discovered nature life presented a better opportunity. A life for a true seeker. As adventurers. As hunter/gatherers going up on trails on remote mountains. To endure the harsh climate of future earth.

With wild-life evolving.

A human intellect wondering and dreaming.

About the end of current times.

# THE END