



Illustration 16: Hanging gardens

Colour Backdrop: Brilliant artificial white lights, inside giant weather dome of Phoenix Hope and its layers upon layers of maisonettes with verandas and hanging gardens, and garden roof tops. The Man believed people needed space to live, gone the old tenements of the empire, come three and five bedroom flats and houses with such gardens, what went up must have gardens and room; families were big, cloning existed.

And each house and flat shall have a creative room, let the people have creativeness whether in the house or soil, but let them use their minds and hands and not be bored. Let them exercise their souls so they light up,” Tintagel the Wise his Chronicles.

*

“He strode about in his pink pantaloons dragging Posidonius behind with his bionic eleven fingers, and his enemies dared not speak or shot him in case Posidonius was killed.

The Man was no torturer a pity, for Posidonius should reap what he sowed,” Nesta wrote in her diary, also “Not a soldier dared fire even if Posidonius had come bearing the seal of Governor of Phoenix Hope, appointed by Augustus through the bribes of Aelfric to Po Wei the corrupt government official.

And examination of Nesta’s diary clearly shows her heart had gone out to The Man for, “He was like a lost child amongst many children and I was bitter towards those who could make such a fine man as he act the way he was. And I was in turmoil for FEAR kept showing its head in my mind, why and where it came from I am not sure? But a virus knew for it wanted to eat little girls playing at astronauts.

And hated those who had ruined his garden of hope, Phoenix Hope into blight and FEARED whatever Aelfric had planted in me?”

And the virus knew where she got FEAR and giggled for it was alive and rats laugh but the human ear cannot hear them for so high the rat pitch.

“A RAT LAUGHING, IT IS TRUE,” Tintagel.

“Apathy is a soldier’s worst friend; and these men knew their fate was sealed for they were far from home and knew a Man’s dictatorial fleet was approaching.

Apathy made them throw down their weapons and sit waiting the end; The Man had an easy time,” Tintagel, Chronicles.

And when the last ship blasted off leaving a trail of poisonous exhaust whispers outside New Saturn 12, The Man took Posidonus’s fast yacht brought as cargo and with that evil man sought the trader ships and HIS children and took Tintagel and Nesta..

And Posidonus saw hope for he was alive and had FEAR for he knew The Man would execute him, whereas his Emperor Augustus would destroy him slowly down to his last cell.....slowly not in the bath? So knowing his yacht he planned to escape.

“Where is Posidonus?” Nesta asked hoping she was wrong but they knew she was serious. So setting the auto pilot for New Saturn 12 followed her and found the Traitor Posidonus was nowhere to be found on the yacht.

Just a handcuff and a cosmetic hand.

In his cabin on a radiator.

And it had a finger missing.

“So I am not the only bionic,” The Man laughing and, “You want be needing this then Posidonus,” and The Man took from his belt the finger he had taken from evil Posidonus and flushed it down the toilet.

Once Nesta would have thought badly of The Man but now she was the one being tamed?

“Do we put on yellow space suits for outside now?” She asked.

“Might be wise, never know what the little pig rigged up as a going away present?” Tintägel.

“OK, and Nesta don’t worry about pursuit?” The Man

“Why?”

“We left the bees,” and The Man grinned.

“Indeed a machine of war, no a god of war come to visit us,” Nesta thought.

*

Yes Posidonius the little piglet had rigged the yacht for he had activated a homing device in the auto pilot that was navigating the ship back to New Earth instead of New Saturn 12 and what The Man saw on the co-ordinates on the screen was an illusion.

Nor did the yacht self detonate as the self explode buttons where on the bridge and The Man was there so it meant one thing only.

PSOIDONUS WAS STILL ABOARD SHIP, *since the yacht was too small to have a lifeboat, a dingy perhaps or some life belts , but yellow suits and they were all accounted for.*

*

There he stood with his silver wings folded down behind his back alone with his thoughts.

“For deep pure thought is the finest prayer to God,” Tintagel his Chronicles.

And Nesta try as she might looked at The Man afraid he did notice; and he had for her reflection was on the screen and beyond the screen all space. And he was pleased watching her change for he saw her not as a girl anymore the more but as a woman he would take.

“Damn,” Nesta whispered as she saw her reflection also but was saved any embarrassment for a lifeboat floated across the screen.

“It is huge, surely a liner has perished,” The Man.

“It must hold thousands of survivors,” Tintagel added.

And the Man was a curious man who wanted the name of the builder on the bulkheads so he or she could build him those lifeboats.

And somewhere warnings flashed in Tintagel’s mind for he worked his agents hard but this yacht was not one of their ships, so the computer told him nothing.

But to Nesta a ship was a ship, a fish a fish, that lifeboat out there was just a big ship; so helped herself to one of Tintagel’s Victory V’s.

“What am I doing,” she thought as the sweet’s heat enveloped her throat.

“It is not a lifeboat but a trap; it holds an army not people desperate to be rescued,” Nesta blurted.

Tintagel didn’t mind the sweet but did mind these words.

“Don’t worry I won’t put my friends in danger, but it is heading towards us anyway so we don’t have a choice, yellow space suit time I think?” The Man.

“As long as he lives he is hope,
 A magnet to the oppressed and weary.
 He is the father of street children and
 Enemy of Augustus for
 He is the One who Condemns the Guilty.” Nesta said.

The Man smiled and too comfort her was about to put his eleven fingered bionic
 hand on her shoulder but at the last moment put his human hand there.

She felt strength in his closeness and did something amazing, she replaced his
 hand with the eleven fingers.

He smiled again.

Tintagel sucked another sweet.

“Are you not a little afraid? You are amongst friends, you can relax?” Nesta
 was afraid and hoped the others were also

“See Tintagel, I am King of Rudeness, I conquer planets and women and
 it takes an ordinary girl to ask me if I am afraid, what nerve? No what courage for I
 am The Man,” and Tintagel looked hard at Nesta as he visualised her succeeding,
 where a thousand woman had failed, to tame The Man.

Now Nesta was sorry for him, he must be afraid; no one ever went through life
 never knowing FEAR. He was amongst his friends so could admit it; where there a
 million listeners on radio? No, just them; he must be a very lonely man Nesta
 concluded.

And Tintagel caught by Nesta staring at her smiled, a strange smile as if to say

‘Hello mistress?’ A future mistress perhaps?

*

In this instance The Man would have done life a favour if he had blown the life boat to hell.

But he knew not who was aboard,

THE MASTER PRIEST.

And we get at last to meet the genius who sold the animator’s secrets for gold.

The Master Priest, The Man’s Public Enemy no. 1.

The Master Priest who had long natural flowing purple hair, as advertisement of his wares; glowing albino eyes and the body of a weight lifter.....and tattooed all over in mythological creatures.

And he was hungry.....for over a week he had been working on a quasar signal to send to Nesta to activate the virus in her.

And it would kill Nesta but get The Man as well and that was what Aelfric was paying him for.

Success at this job meant orders galore for his reputation would glow like a neon sign flashing his prices.

And because he was hungry wanted off his man made work shop a satellite so summoned droid 34A to prepare his lifeboat; he was going to Vegas Hotel, a den run by Don Alexander Llatchur.

Vegas Hotel had the biggest Ferris wheel known. It was covered in a million Xmas lights and could be seen from deep space.

Vegas had burger bars on it and strips joints.

And The Master Priest was hungry and ready for fun.

Vegas Hotel had lots of fun especially for those just paid.

And he was very hungry and Vegas was the biggest brothel in space and The Master Priest knew he could feed there; for a price, a working girl had eight pints of nourishing blood and he could feed without FEAR of he who Condemns the Guilty.

Even the empire had laws protecting working girls for a termination contract had to be signed willingly and the cash to go to the resurrected clone or relations.

It was a popular way of getting quick cash.

But Vegas was different, it needed steady customers like The Master Priest but even here there were limits because the other customers would complain about The Master Priest's appetite. And Alexander Llatichur knew that when customers complained it was time for The Master Priest to go.

And the bill was outrageous for all the bodies needed taken care of, the risk of disease, the supply of slaves needed, *all amounted to a lot of cash.*

That sort of demand brought attention and attention brought imperial troops and the place would be ransacked; a deliberate lesson to Alexander to manage his guests better and do things quietly.

After all even Po Wei and Aelfric Europe visited.

"And I know my worth?" The Master Priest so he was given a free pass to get in on his next visit, a win win situation for him and Alexander.

You see The Master Priest was a *Gothic vampire* and loved to see the look of doom in his victim's eyes as he opened the door to them to enter his hotel room.

"Don't worry, the rumours about me are all lies, nothing bad will happen to you and you will leave here a rich woman," The Master Priest told them and was lies.

"Vegas, here I come," The Master Priest crooned dreamily on his way to Vegas Hotel Planet.

And since Vegas was a melting pot of human and alien he had plenty of genes to play with as he was never one to waste.

And The Master Priest had given himself a fantastic physic through gene therapy via shuttle genes and knew he was a demigod.

For when he was bored he created mutants with six arms and one eye in the back of their head.

Gave them swords and watched them hack each other to bits.

"To the victor I will give a new body and life," he promised them all to make them fight and of course it was LIES.

The Master Priest a genius and rich for the wealthy came to him for their tailored anatomical needs. Did not Po Wei pay him to make a six inch ballerina so his music box was different from all else for she was alive.

And he knew Aelfric was a robot and Aelfric saw that as a threat to his dreams of ABSOLUTISM so knew never to bathe in Aelfric's house?

"All admire me, all?" And The Master Priest paused, "All," and he knew The Man condemned him as the guiltiest.

And he laughed for it was he who had made the virus inside Nesta but he laughed so hard he choked on his own saliva.

Such the evil genius The Master Priest who had taken science into the garden of the animator.

And as his lifeboat sailed away from his work shop he lay back on a bed and allowed a female massager to oil his flesh that was living marble and he took her wrist and bit and fed.

Now she was slave and feared if she refused he would kill her, so she put her trust in evil that he would not drain all her blood and he held her down and bit her neck and still she hoped for mercy.

Can evil be trusted?

And with an extended stomach and a belch he rolled off the lifeless girl and droid 34A flew in to remove the remains of dinner and dumped her in a cooling lotion to preserve her for she was genetic building blocks for The Master Priest to draw upon.

He might even put stem cells into her brain to awaken her with a spark of life but would she be the same girl or another? So the slave was lucky, he had liked her, gentlemen prefer blondes they say.

She had put her trust in evil.

And The Master Priest went to sleep for her blood would be digested in a special gut he had grown for himself to digest all he drank.

MEAT MADE HIM VOMIT.

FRUIT CAUSED HIM BOILS.

MILK CONSTIPATION.

FISH TWITCHES.

BECAUSE HE HAD INTERFERRED SO MUCH WITH HIMSELF.

HE NEEDED THAT SPECIAL GUT.

TO SURVIVE ON YOUR DONATED BLOOD.

AND SOME BLOOD WAS INFECTED SO

HE HAD hepatitis,

All the V.D.'s.

Anaemia,

Sickle cell variety,

AIDS.

And without urgent medical attention you would not survive anyway being his dinner guest.

FOR YOU WAS HIS DINNER.

He was insane.

He was genetic material gone wrong.

He was truly evil.

For he survived on genetic strands and in a way could be said he was THE FIRST

NUCLEUR MAN.

In fact he was a human TESTE FLY that was no longer totally human.

And he was having a nightmare for droid 34A was in a panic **for it was watching a yacht zooming down upon them**, and the panic had disturbed the aurora of The Master Priest so he tossed and turned and awoke.

*

“It has activated a missile, that is a lifeboat?” Tintagel amazed.

The Man crossed his arms and unfolded his silver wings in agitation then grunted.

Nesta asked Tintagel for a sweet to suck and with a sigh he gave her the packet.

The heat had a soothing effect upon the nerves and allowed one to think clearly at times like this.

Then The Man flicked a blue switch, “Hold her steady Nesta.”

Droid 34A found someone on the yacht had just deactivated the missile so sent out a holographic image of a platoon of shock troops to scare.

They seemed to float all about Nesta who kept the yacht's course steady and won admiration from The Man and Tintagel.

In reply he sent his own image back and droid 34A recognised him and knew

FEAR.

The fear switched on a droid 34A self destruct programme and it went to wait for The Man in the loading bay. It didn't want to self destruct but The Master Priest had built that into it for his own preservation.

“Only the strong survive,” quoted from The Master Priest and was his excuse to lie always.

And he didn't mean for it to self destruct near him and droid 34A knew to wake him rather than let him awake naturally would bring punishment; like what happened to slave 33C and was now nuts and bolts waiting fixing into a cyborg trooper.

The emperor wanted this cyborg so he could admire her frontal beauty while her back; the robot trooper protected him. An imperial whim and Augustus had the money to spend while beggars begged his capital.

"You have a steady hand Nesta," The Man beside her and she was pleased.

Tintagel coughed; this little wisp of a girl was stealing The Man from under his nose.

So it was then the three of them boarded the lifeboat. It was Nesta's opportunity to show The Man she was not spineless but Nesta and it was she who saw droid 34A hiding behind some cargo.

"We must get out of here now," The Man recognising the droid as a bomb.

And they escaped the hold and in adjoining chilled holds saw tanks with body parts suspended in solutions.

"What monster commands this hell ship?" The Man demanded and Tintagel's suspicions rose. For there was the blond slave drained of blood and on her neck puncture marks.

Then droid 34A who had heard its master say, "Better late than never," floated in and Nesta ran and shoved it back into the hold slamming the door locking it.

And the detonation was late and the ship rocked and heat came shooting out of the ventilation shafts.

"It was a bomb, Nesta you have saved us," and The Man held her for a moment for she was shaking that she had come close to being blown up.

And The Master Priest called for droid 34A but suspected it had destroyed itself.

"Who has boarded my ship?" **He asked fearing the answer.**

Now smoke began billowing in the air vents and he regretted ever programming droid 34A to self destruct. There was nothing else to do but flee so he lay down in his bed and pressed a nearby button and the bed took the shape of a closed cigar and was dropped to another lower level of the ship and ejected into space."it was a TUBE.

Alone in the darkness of space made him FEAR the silence of space.

The Cosmos the living animator he FEARED.

Then switched on a transmitter hoping to pick up his enemies voices.

Then his lifeboat blew up and "No one can survive that?" He heard a girl.

Only one man he feared and he scanned space for him for it was he who had made the bionics for The Man years earlier before The Man Condemned the Guilty.

"I must find a place to hide, my credit is good," and he tapped in Vegas Hotel in his capsule's mini computer.

"Two weeks one day," it replied.

He pressed 'OK.'

He was hungry now, in two weeks he would be ravenous, almost dead from hunger; he flipped open the emergency ration box..

“A rat? Who’s responsible for this?” But she was dead, she was not a spineless slave after all and although she had put her trust in evil, she had taken out an insurance policy on him, a rat.

It was dead now, stiff and ugly, it’s beautiful soul already gone to join the animator.

And The Master Priest sank his fangs into the fur that tasted like wet dog and tried to suck up the blood within, but the rat had been dead for over a week so its blood was dry.

“I will starve,” he shouted and threw the little corpse away.

It landed down beside his feet that he could not reach for the capsule was so small.

A capsule that was cosy and two weeks and one day is a long time for a vermin corpse that was already one week old.

“Ouch,” he complained as tubes inserted themselves into his body to collect waste.

He tried to shut his eyes and sleep but the smell kept him awake.

He tried to sleep but his hunger pains kept him awake too.

He tried to dream but FEAR that The Man was not dead kept him awake also.

He managed to fall sleep at last when he got the computer to inject him with a sleeper vial to conserve oxygen and food.

“Peace at last,” he mumbled dreaming of the pleasures of Vegas Hotel and saw boggy men as the smell drifted up his nose and triggered off nightmares.

*

“What a stink? Something dead in there?” The Man.

The Master Priest tried to wake up, this was indeed a
nightmare.

*

Posidonius was a survivor and none saw him emerge from his hiding place aboard
the yacht he knew so well and saw the lifeboat.

MAYBE THE MAN HADN'T KNOW WHO OWNED IT
BUT HE DID.

So the cold carving knife at the base of Nesta's neck brought her back to reality.
Now very slowly she turned and looked into the face of Posidonius.

Where were her friends? They had become separated in the flight from the lifeboat
as they realised droid 34A had destroyed the ship.

Smoke and flames and emotional rather than rational escape as all ran towards the
green exit signs.

Some things like Posidonius just never change!

And she was revolted as he sunk his soiled finger nails into her arm forcing her
into a tube; much like the one The Master Priest had escaped in. Also his greasy face
and chin stubble rubbed her cheeks and he smelt of engine oil and diesel.

But he didn't care, his friend Aelfric would be kind to him and not shout for once;
he was bringing Nesta home where Aelfric would allow him to play doctor as reward;
and what ever happened to the nurse, better ask Posidonius?

Shame, for his friend Aelfric saw humans as TRASH so never confided all his
secrets in Posidonius who was ignorant of a virus.

A virus that wasn't choosy about its source of food, robots or humans or aliens, all the same; a little salt and pepper and it was all the bash.

"What was that?" Tintagel asked as he noticed the escape tube appear shooting its way across the tracking screen on the bridge.

"Nesta?" The Man worried which meant Posidonius had her or she didn't escape the blast?

And the yacht needed a droid like 34A to repair it.

"The tracking system says the tube is heading for Vegas Hotel the nearest habitable cluster of rocks," Tintagel.

SILENCE.....The Man knew Nesta's fate if she reached there and if she was in the tube with Posidonius she might not?

"She is one of us," Tintagel answered for them and The Man knew he was going after Nesta, *his dictatorship had a cyborg look a like running it and he had many capable ministers of state, perhaps cyborg look a likes or their human or alien clones? How originals adventured across deep space like The Man?*

Now Tintagel saw The Man's reflection on the screen; arms folded silver wings also, bionic eleven fingers twitching; perhaps Nesta was the one to settle him down and make him a more presentable political image, *a family dictator kissing babies rather making them, and Tintagel smiled over his wicked joke.*

And The Man wondered what was Nesta's true age, what with all the cosmetic implants and stem cell activity no one had a date of birth; *'and shook his head, what if Nesta was eleven and like others a child on contraception, no no she was a street*

urchin, an assassin, hand picked by his enemies, and The Man did not like himself for he felt as if he was a child molester, but in the empire of the Sutherlands there was no such thing for humankind had done away with the age of consent,' from Chronicles of Tintagel.

Sexual activity was the age of consent, it was said we came to these physical planes to experience life and The Man yelled his war cry into the microphone into space.

“Yeehaw.”

“I make laws to protect the Nesta’s of this world against the likes of me,” *for his screech was that of despair as he hoped Nesta was not a cosmetically altered child but a woman he was growing an attachment for;* Chronicles Tintagel.

“And The Man could make as many laws as he wanted but some things would never change,” Tintagel.

*

Nesta’s diary

I knew we were heading for the Vegas Cluster of rocky moons as Posidonius was lecturing me about the planet's benefits, especially for the likes of me.

Confined with him for two weeks and a day in a tube designed for a single person.

Go ahead ask, of course he abused me; this is life not a TV movie where The Lone Ranger rides to the rescue!

Why FEAR returned to me, first that he would abuse me as he pawed, FEAR that The Man would reject me because of Posidonus, FEAR I might fall pregnant and FEAR I might catch a disease from this evil man.

It was like being in a coffin that tube and I am sure he was pretending his finger was a scalpel as he drew imaginary lines on my torso.

“Soon I will pluck it out and hold it up too you to watch it beat,” he said to me meaning my heart.

Anyway soon the tube began to smell as the air filter was not designed for two and found a black humour when I winded and knew I had offended him, but he belched and stunk the place up himself. The tube was a nightmare, cramped, my suit a rumpled mess about my feet, his naked body continually pressed against mine. “I condemn the Guilty The Man” but so do I and hoped my turn would come and Posidonus would know what an angry woman is capable of?

Would I ever see The Man again and Tintagel both of whom had shown me respect and friendship? Would The Man ever want me after Posidonus? Gads here comes Posidonus again, his hairy chest itches me, where can I look, at the side of the tube and stare at the smooth lining of the material, not even a crawling bug to take my mind away from Posidonus. And he forces my head around to glimpse his gloating eye.

He is not ashamed or bored, I am his entertainment; no guilt in his eyes, just a gloating victory of a man who has done his business to show women men are superior.”

*

And The Man saw his folly, a giant anchored statue of Liberty he had made to advertise FREEDOM in space for all.

For all who ventured to Vegas as forced workers must pass it and knew The Man was coming to CONDEMN THE GUILTY.

And Nesta saw the statue and was reminded of The Man.

“He will not save you,” Posidonius for he read her mind.

*

Now The Master Priest awoke to find The Man staring down at him who was unlocking the latches, opening the tube before it was programmed to do so. Alarm bells inside blared into The Master Priest’s ears, an oxygen mask automatically came out of the tube’s ceiling giving life.

TERROR not FEAR gripped the mad scientist The Master Priest who had visions of the pressure outside bulging his eyes out of their sockets as he swelled and exploded.

“You will never know what happened to Nesta,” The Master Priest screamed.

The Man stopped the execution and listened.

“A virus? Only one such as you could do that?” The Man tempted to unlock the latches and depressurise the scientist.

And behind them the yacht drifted away so The Man and Tintagel attached their waste and oxygen lines to the tube, it would be a while before they got to the yacht again; they were all going to Vegas.

“I hate you Cluny James Smith,” The Master Priest hissed feeling ill even before The Man exhaled. Even before they got back to the yacht the exhaled air would be recycled and The Master Priest would have inhaled it all in. He felt that The Man was in his body, reading his mind, eating his innards from within.

Besides The Man would need more than pepper and salt to digest him, besides The Man didn't eat carrion.

*

A fanfare of trumpets and skin drummers made much noise as Aelfric Europe walked up the ivory steps to the gold throne of the Emperor Augustus Sutherland.

Today was his day.

In his element.

All eyes were upon their future ABSOLUTE leader.

So walked straight, chest puffed out, head back, full of pride and do any parade ground sergeant major proud.

His ambitions were being fulfilled, he was the robot made of cogs and flesh, spare parts hanging on a wall, others in freezers, skin waiting grafting, his childhood memories; he was a robot made good.

Now Augustus would sign the peace treaty with the traders who were assembled behind him. Such a treaty would recognise the existence of The Traders Association as a self ruling body with Aelfric its ABSOLUTE leader.

Exempt from imperial laws.

And Po Wei had arranged this under blackmail and a large bribe.

Po Wei didn't want Aelfric telling his master that the Phoenix Hope invasion was a disaster and heeded Aelfric's warning that if he wasn't made ABSOLUTE ruler of the traders he would no longer financially support the empire.

You know, Po Wei planned a bath for Aelfric these days, wonder why?

Character Update Master Priest

These notes were taken from the laboratory of The Master Priest by Tintagel the Wise and from memory cells from the scientist's brain itself.

They are authentic and true.

"There is no one like me, are you not proud of me mother?" He asked and somewhere inside his brain a negative message travelled through his nerve ways.

"Do not make me annoyed mother or I shall punish you for I am hungry."

This text gives great insight into one of the power fullest scientific brains ever known.

"I gave you life mother, are not parts of your cerebellum in mine? Do you not enjoy watching the fruits of your labour at work?" He often spoke to her or wrote such many times.

But he had murdered his mother and had a droid, probably 34A insert parts of her brain into his. A punishment for her as he knew his mother hated him and now she was very close, very.

And because he could not bear to see his papa mourn for his wife, he did him in too. "The boy is cruel, he pulls insects apart out of boredom and eats mice and drinks blood out of rats," John Gunn his father worriedly to his wife Mari.

This couple saw their son as the devil incarnate for they were devote worshippers of God. They belonged to no denomination, but listened to their spirits that joyed when they watched the red sunset and felt the warm summer rain.

Now young Luke Gunn could not accept life and wanted more than singing in a hidden underground cavern for the worship of God was outlawed in the empire. Perhaps this is what inspired young Gunn to go to university and read science? He wanted to play God, to create life, Baron Frankenstein must have been his favourite novel; whatever he got his degree.

The other way to escape the boring planet his parents lived on was to enlist and allow a hitch hiking girl to accompany him to a lonely outpost and dump her. Never mind as a barrack companion she would planet hop till she found what she was looking for. But he was a man, to enlist had risks; wars got you killed.

Science was the road to riches, fame *and hitch hikers*.