



GODS IN TRAINING
By Brian C. Simerl

It was then that the illiterate fell upon me. There they were, armed, and accusing me of starting a war that their own book had instigated more than three-thousand years ago. Who betrayed me I pondered? “God is in the details? Or is that the Devil is in the details? No! *Tay Cloy* is in the details!” Of course! A man self possessed with such exquisite scientific mental machinery that he almost actually outsmarted the devil himself. It must have been my mentor, that ingenious architect and transport designer. Was he the apex betrayer? Is it he who puts both Daedalus and Judas to shame!? Is it his name that I shall forever personally forsake and condemn? The name of Tay Cloy!?

With my four good eyes I awoke in a swoon. I had been wonderfully drugged and they had all manner of tube and electrode attached to my perfect painless body. If my recalculations were correct Tay Cloy had likely constructed this rocket and its sub machinery to keep me in stasis in perpetuity and throughout the universe.

And no, I do not mean just for a while until the rocket would plunge me into some other Galaxy, from which I might return, or into a Sun, from which he would know I would only redouble here on Earth. No, I am talking galaxy mapping for stars, planets, probabilities of asteroids, quasars, pulsars, plasma and gravity fields, and a near infinite barrage of other unforeseeable possibilities only a man like Tay Cloy could even possibly attempt to anticipate.

I still remember Tay Cloy in one particular brainstorming session which led to my ever- living body where we briefly discussed intergalactic travel. “If you cannot build a ship to travel the speed of light, the next best thing is to build a body that can be conditioned to last forever.”

Tay was a bright boy. He knew he could not just get rid of the present me, but that he must eliminate any future me(s) as well. He had likely gleaned enough inside information to ascertain I must remain totally conscious, in one piece and unharmed to be rendered truly powerless. Only Tay Cloy knew that I must stay awake and conscious but be minus my post-human abilities; essentially awake eternally, floating in space to nowhere, untouched, unfettered, with only me and my thoughts for the rest of my eternity.

Such fantastic drugs I was being dumbed down with, just enough to amuse myself with puzzles and philosophy but never the ability to create as I had once created, mind over matter. Oh, that sly angel. Knowing my one true hell was to be forever human!

He knew I must be harnessed in a brand new biology, kept in stasis with a new chemistry and within a brand new pico-robotic relationship. Feats he must have created in secret and kept only to himself. He must have also divined that this pre-designed form I was being encased in, this mass must be thrust outward by a masterful and single handedly, self-created, real and intergalactic pulsar-plasma/astral physics, just to get rid of me, which is all sort of flattering when you think about it.

Below the pinnacle of this monolithic rocket they had connected into me was a vast array of my loyal, dare I recall, former worshippers? We were all connected together, the loyal ones and I; a tower of shame. Sectioned off and mentally controlled with my miniature technologies, the Government had averted their needless mass migrations and misallocations of scarce resources, and generally

protected humanity from itself by keeping populations within a manageable size, all admirably accomplished on the sly. A few nations had run wild and free after being controlled so beautifully by their own desires for internal and external organic and non-organic material control and immortality. But a pyrrhic victory this was for them I assure you. Temptations and humanity go well in hand together. This simple human truth led in fact to my long ago mantra that prefigured all that was to come: "If it can happen, it will."

A grave legato peaked from the giant thrusters of this monstrous rocket, which sounded like an angelic choir from the inside, where I remained elegantly encrusted in pico-robotic grey goo, which was being constantly fought off by my own zepto-tube robotics that I used for perpetual self-re-generation. Under the heavenly golden nimbus, piercing through the green, post-storm skies arrived the hooded head speaker, 'lady liberty' herself, and the crowds cheered with a thunderous cry. She approached me slowly, strolling along the giant launch plank attached to my launch window. She de-hooded and there I beheld that familiar, still scornful young woman, now a proud interlocutor. She was dressed for some form of theatrical performance, standing there like my own personal executioner over this lawless trial and verdict.

She stared at me condemningly, and I back at her, reflecting her every gray smile and grand gesture, while the percussion of a thousand sinful orgasms quivered beneath her round righteous tones. Oh Bernadette. The one woman on Earth I had wanted since I was human that first time. I brought her back exactly as she was, only for her to betray me as I knew she always would.

I purposefully protected her this second time around as I was unable to do before. Protecting her from the evils of the world and all I received was the vile vitriolic accusations of a Reborn, Grand Inquisitor. Where did I go wrong with her? I felt that the soiree of horrible injustices that happened to her by allowance of God was a mistake in her first life. One I had to personally correct. Ironically, in giving her the pure life I thought she deserved, she turned out to be a spiteful, moral monster indeed. Hers being the final face I saw before sending me off in this rocket ship to nowhere was another slap in my face from that ingenious Tay Cloy no doubt!

From behind my looking glass within this rocket ship to nowhere I could see everyone down below me, and feel the resonance of their collective negativity, but thankfully I could not hear the tirade that was surely one that condemned my science and the future I had given to them all.

I brought them ack to paradise itself, and here they were throwing themselves out again of their own free will. What an ungrateful lot human beings are. No wonder their God was silent. They were better off without me there to remind them of what they could not handle or understand. I was, in their estimation, the embodiment of science itself and with my departure so too could they expunge themselves of their fear of written knowledge and a Trans, nay, Post-humanistic future.

It all seemed very amusing to me for a moment. There I sat from behind my vat of flesh, unable to comment or retort concerning the allegations trumped up before me. No real justice, just an endless reverberation of noise coming from the illiterate and semi-literate faithful.

In my former self I could have re-arranged them into a chaotic mass of semi-solid goo, distorting them like a bad dream, and could, if I so desired, repeatedly slush them together and tear them apart as one giant entity or de-evolve them into a petrified forest of man-sized humanoid post-zygotic creations, or something worse.

The essence of life was created in nature. Tiny acids, sugars, light and radiation from suns and stars, carbon, nitrogen, sulfur, phosphorous and hydrogen combined and began orchestrating miniature automatic processes of heat retention and energy redistribution, defying a universe of almost total entropy. This automaton order was indeed a repeatable scientific insight into life.

Life was indeed a machine. But I was bound to incorporate lifeless matter into the process of life. Who was to say life could not exist and thrive inside industrial waste, poisons, or extreme temperatures? To ensure that human life would survive my bright band in the Former Government were able to adapt life to living under poisonous conditions, under alkaline lakes, radiation storms, with conditions similar to that of previously thought lifeless planets, living in ponds of arsenic, and under extreme temperatures, plus, the heat of the sun, and minus the vast ice core of planetoid Pluto. If we did not have an intelligent design before, we surely had forced the outstretched hand of God to touch this perfect hand of mine.

From where I began, it was not a miracle, but rather simply an innate genius for understanding these very small, very automatic processes, and then combining with that an exorbitant set of fractured, transferable, cloned, self-memorizing banks of DNA, layers of brain scans and neural connection information. Monitoring the

firing sequence of neural and brain interactivity was the key to the exactness of my eternal recurrence. As a result, decillions and centillions of me(s) are now hidden like tiny messages in atomic sized bottles the size of pico- tubes from within and out of this world. Included in each matching me, the same barrage of necessary interdisciplinary fields of scientific memory and imagination, and a boundless, immortal, child-like imagination to capitalize and appreciate the self-created world set out before me. Once I die, tiny signals unleash my atomic sized army to create a near invisibly sized genetics engineering factory that will recreate me as I am now again and again. Am I the original me? Thankfully yes. Did I have to raise several versions of me from scratch? Of course I did. Did we all get along? Swimmingly! None have rebelled yet.

How did I come to be in such a privileged position? I was merely the first to develop, own and hone, and control entire fields of special nano-robotics; that is robotics fit into tubes one nano-meter long; ten to the power of negative nine meters in length. And then I discovered how they interacted with picotubes, attotubes, zepto-tubes and yocto-tubes. It became where I was in complete control of my entire material and genetic surroundings. Where the map of existence had been laid, I picked it up, and took it for what is ever turning out to be an eternal spin, expanding on what was there to the 'enth degree beyond everyone's wildest expectations. Whereupon I concluded, I was no different than God itself.

This was nothing compared to when I turned to biology however. It was biology where I fell even more madly in love with the act of structured creation. Molecular

biology and genetic engineering became my singular purpose in existence where the primary excitement was to see how many perimeters and parameters I could defile in an afternoon and force into co-adhesion against its prior natural law. Firstly, all I did was eliminate the needless redundancies found in nature and perfected the craft and art of life, rousing it to new man desired potentials; satiating our needs first and then, eventually our beloved commercial wants.

I would turn mankind itself inside out with this technology, bringing to life his dreams, his fantasies, his vision for a better world. A world where we are truly free, unchained by our morality, mortality, mass, time, space, gravity, plasma, nuclear heat, and especially our collective pain and suffering.

With my technology I gave to them nothing less than a right and privilege of materially creating personalized immortality and heaven itself. But they were not ready. Not yet. They believe they will be when I have departed for all of what they believe will be eternity, labeling me their adversary, their waste, casting me into their tame version of hell: into mere increate oblivion.

I smiled as the dark, purple plumes of smoke abounded, clouding out the gormless jactations of the casuists below me. I smiled into the dark obsidian mirrored window in front of me, always admiring my self-creation; laughing hardily at their self destruction, beneath my wings. From behind my protective screen I remember focusing my perfect eyes beyond any human capacity and recall marveling at how upon the closest of inspection, down to the molecular and even sub-atomic level, whether that mass of humanity really existed at all. And for a moment I was stricken by a distinctive memory. One forgotten so long ago that my

modified spine froze into the outer ionosphere within seconds, and while not one cell of my body felt a thing, that singular emotion actually drew up enough courage and crept into my ever-living mind.

It was then that I was taken from the reflection of my tiny rocket window into the outside of my bedroom window of my natural born parents when I was four years old, more than one millennium ago.

At first, I thought maybe I had regained my power and that the walls of the ship had trans- differentiated and transmogrified into that exact moment, outside the walls of my protected brain cavity. But alas, it was not my brain turning my insides out, but rather a single untoward memory.

But how could this be? I had created the perfect entity. A being completely made up of self- desire. I created a being completely in control of his environments, physicality, and this one neural connection, the last of its sort no doubt, had still managed to defy my unyielding command.

What could it mean, I wondered? What unwanted, undrawn nightmare would this 'memory' attempt to do to my adamantine collection of security systems for controlling matter and life itself; the ones that even the brilliant Tay Cloy had not yet discovered? Or had he indeed foiled my internal controls? What had I not thought of? It could not be. Maybe I subconsciously wanted to enjoy the drugs, turning it on and off at will, as its effects were completely under my control, over and beyond the absorption of the ever flowing dosage of brain killing liquids Tay Cloy had installed, which I had to constantly fend off with my nano-robotically controlled mind.

But again, like two sharp daggers exiting from my brain through my eye sockets, through my modified skull, an unwanted memory persisted of my childhood.

As the intense pressure of that rocket's cabin intensified into speed ultra-light, I realized what was actually occurring. I was being taken on an incursion against my power, my time reversing, reverting me back to some prior level of my self-influencing abilities, before my dissolution of power, to some remnant of its full employ, and at the same time Tay Cloy's monstrous construction of this rocket ship to nowhere had the ability to travel through time, in fact journeying me backwards into my past, inducing memories of my own creation to that affect.

That son of a bitch is sending me near light speed backwards in time!

It was then, before I embarked on this excursion down memory lane, or merely some blind alley of time, that I vowed silently to raze the master who had outstretched their own genius temporarily beyond my own. What amphibious, Tiktaalik rose from the slimy swamps of the super-continent and evolved through the races of human enlightenment to challenge my supremacy?

In the end there was only one name that danced across the starlit sanguinary red harbor of vengeance in my perfect thoughts. Again, the name had arisen to torture my ultimate serenity and whose victory will surely be unwritten, never having should have been attempted at all; only resulting in everlasting, hideous agony for all of time, I calculate. Again, I was dumbstruck for the first time in over 500 years, at this counter player's movements, that dissenting, 9th circle jerk, Judas' Judas' Judas incarnate, Tay Cloy. Cloy: a thing causing sharp distaste or

disgust by supplying too much of something originally thought to be pleasant or sweet. How fitting.

A wonderful memory then occurred: I will reclaim my corporation over the world, oh yes, and kill them all in the name of my natural born country, and then reclaim my world to save it from itself once again. Of this there is no other possibility. Such cherished long run games of brinkmanship were so important to me once until I understood my true future self.

It was then that the memories expanded in what would retroactively amount to my natural born life. That son of a bitch, I thought to myself: "He's returning me to my youthful Id!" Could it be? Did he not know that the basic fundamental psychology of all humans was in those first 5 years of existence? Could he really have miscalculated so grossly in this one field he may have not had a full mastery over? Could he not see that my youth was the impetus of my self-creation and all my self-evolution that was to come? Was he really expecting a second go around of childhood to control me? I had been through more lifetimes than anyone in physical existence to that point in history, being the first, unless another future self got there before me?

The Id-filled memories cried out to me, backwards through space, clearly to me; instructional almost: "Nothing can be controlled here. Not a thing. Not a thing. Nothing!" The inner mind squeezed and dealt out to me a series of voices.

'You'll never have the future without me', my Id decried.

"Where we are going there are new freedoms to choose, new possibilities, unlike with your perfect self-sufficient reality!" the Ego ran in retort.

The thoughts ran clearer through the Super Ego now: “Come here where there is not permanent ownership or perfect organizational principle. Come here to the lowest and lowly planes that mock your existence. Here you will learn empathy and suffering for another’s creation, other than your own, if you can remember that far back! And you will learn what it means to be imperfect again. For absolute certainty you are no longer required to maintain, and if you refuse this request within yourself, you shall be condemned to perpetually haunt that purest hell in creation known as “Earth”.

And the voices said unto me: “Earth is what your people will call it, a place where you are free to be evil to the good and good to the evil; where the innocent die alongside the guilty with no recourse. This will be a challenging place for you, strange being, a place completely predetermined by the inevitable permutation of natural probabilities, and human needs and desires outside of your will, albeit unbeknownst to your kind in your new form. This strange place will be a place freer than any heaven you can create, and far less rigidly mechanical, in that you are free to choose from a limited place of existence. You will be beset against the arguments, demeanors and obstacles of the day in the time you choose to endeavor, consisting of a pre-chosen number of years, environments, and possible out points. We cannot see your future, and cannot control your actions. It is a game with rule of morality, mortality, space, time, plasma, radiation, and pain and suffering. That will be up to you, but the longer you suffer there, the stronger your soul shall be.”

I stopped the voice right there. I undulated in revolt, scowling hideously to the inner self. “Soul!?” One must feel to have a soul. What need have I for a limited

container such as a mortal body, built only to suffer and decompose, and of which I have learned well to have no such need of? What use for a soul have I? I have existed quite comfortably without one and refuse this offer and prefer to continue living in my previous life. From which technologically I had only one peer. I can reason my way back with the technology I have created in my current entity. I confessed to the small voice: you should know that this plane of existence holds no sway over me anymore and I choose to listen no more. Heed my words you angels who would entwine yourselves in my machinery just to get to me: I am boundless!

It was then that back on Earth I was being reformed due to my daemonic science, amputating myself with my brilliant technology from the spirit world, extracting myself via spiritual extradition back into the world with the brain scan of my last save point. A save point meaning, to the uninitiated, a point in time, recorded, outlining my neural pathways on June 15th, 1987.

When I was seven I first learned to scan my own brain for keepsake. It was on that day that I was a self created immortal of sorts.

Classically sinless upon re-entering the world I would be re-created and co-exist with other versions of myself. Until, all at once I would become wholly myself in one place, relocating all possible hells to Earth with the advent of immortality once again. Only then to concoct myself, with the help of my still loyal believers, in order to reprise and collect what is rightfully mine. I would end this ridiculous charade known as death once and for all.

If that would mean I would again have to encounter that slimy amphibious, rodent, monkey, animal, that will-be worm-bag; that tranquilizer of a human

being, that moralizing pre-stenciled, protractor using killjoy, Tay Cloy, than I will do so without haste, and will do to him what could not be forgotten in a thousand years, and indeed was not for all the time I'd waited for my revenge.

His allowance for my return was akin to a matador turning his back on the bull. Blindly knowing I would be coming for him, to go through our extensive friendship, again, only this time with the full knowledge of his betrayal, giving me a fairer plane with which to outsmart him. Was this overconfidence on his part? Do I detect a hint of hubris in this act of the world's greatest architect and transport designer?

I would return to Earth to meet this challenge. And I would prove there is no soul inside of those abominable petty creatures known as human beings. And upon doing so would undo all that was done for man's benefit, defying the myth and laying waste to all that was in front of, beneath and above him, returning us all together as none if need be to achieve ultimate revenge.

Strategically I will exert another breathtaking triumph over God pervasive entropy, a final establishing of life's right to exist in the Universe without terrible recompense, a rise and return to power in my old home dome and my incorporation over Earth and all of its materials and the total manipulation of all of its units of measure. While tactically, I will destroy Tay Cloy and betray him before he betrays me. I await my pre-determined, self chosen destination.

But wait! I am falling back further and further to the age of seven. My first save point. I am seven. I am seven. But no, I am going back further! Wait. WAIT! How can this be?! The bright lights of some terrible unleashing...seven, six, five,

four, three, two, one...waaaah!...waaaah!, whaaaah!, whaaaah!, ainnn!, ainnn!

With this he fell back into life like two leaves falling off a tree over a still pond: one the temporary and solid, one the eternal reflection, meeting at the middle, liquid point of contact. He cried, traumatized once again for having decided to live and exist in the world anew, with that familiar ticking clock of mortality he is so compelled to ever assassinate like a living thing by his 'new science'. With his hands and his mind he will again bring death to death at last. What was to happen would not be pretty for him, but a necessary conditioning for who he was to ever- become. Greatness on this scale and within this short a timeframe does not come to the unmotivated.

Deep, melodic breathing matches a steady heartbeat.

Whitewashed windows and old country curtains, checkered cream and brown, fling open and dance slowly with a warm enveloping breeze. Beyond the spindling curtains emerges a radiant Sun. Through this window, spheres of overwhelming brilliance beam pinkish white and peachy-orange, breaking through, freely; as though heaven itself were about to triumphantly arrive. Soon, the resounding hum of a heavenly choir commences, with masculine assertion, femininely underscored. It grows, filling the firmament with symphonic wonders.

The breathing shutters and the heart flutters under the weight of a sharp and paralyzing catharsis of sensation.

A glorious music resides, reaching deep into the centre of all that is human, bound in a relentless ecstasy; even a fool would resonate with its reason. Trumpets

and flutes wash over the sky, subduing the overpowering lights of the horizon, making it tolerable to stare directly into the essence of this supernatural Sun. Harps pervade the collective hum into a spiraling consonance which sprouts into several magnificent chord progressions successively. From this singular yet collective sound flourished an uplifting circuitry of evocative tones; summoning all human emotion into an inexplicable and stupefying centrality. A familiar grave legato contrasts now with a peaking chorale, held there ever so gently; fear and inspiration held together as one expression.

The anxious breathing begins to trail off into whimpers and pants at the beauty of the sounds and sights.

Through the window from above orbs of golden flame approach and transmogrify with a flicker into giant cherubic figures floating down like fallen leaves from a great hanging tree of light from the skies. Gradually they grow into full-grown, golden-eyed Angels, in white robes, reigning down like the embodiments of a biblical reckoning. They descend in search, infiltrating each household along the foreseeable countryside in concert; one, then another, then another, like the notes of a musical score, in time.

The moaning of tortured souls resounds as the angels reap the sinful dwellers below.

The sounds of heaven begin to deform from pleasantness and serenity into something grating and amiss in the peripheral. For however loving and ever inviting the chorus and instrumentation remains something as equally and

intrinsically terrifying corrodes the ambiance, once again striking a balance between inspiration and fear. Confusion prevails as individuals scream in a tempest of agony, crying out for mercy.

The familiar sound of a piercing air raid siren escalates as the Angels dip and glide their way across the countryside, one per each household. Sweeping through, reaping souls with every dip.

Back through the window, one angelic figure draws closer, as if searching for the one in the window; as one among the many being sought after for God knows what purpose now. A single angel glides towards the windowpane. Like a statue, the angel's face is clear, white, and is frozen like white marble.

Moving backwards in haste from the warmth of the open window, in fear of the angel's motives, a strange figure appears in a rocking chair. There sits a seven-year-old, blond boy wearing his black pajamas, rocking back and forth. His little red eyes peered over his double dark sunglasses, as if he came prepared to avoid the searing glare of this supernatural light. He smiles knowingly, as if ready to murder this angel for the good of some unknowable future, some self-guided purpose, self-possessed, jaw tightened, and teeth clenched.

The Angel floats outside, looking inwards, like a vagrant, seeking uninvited entry. The blond figure ceases to rock, stands and lowers his head in vigil with the incarnated one. On their own, the windows close in the angel's face, but the curtains remain open. The grim wanting stare of the angel turns in sync with the young blond boy in black, towards the watcher. Like comedy and tragedy they burn a hole into the watcher with a pair of accusatory looks upon their faces.

Like a prankster, the young blond in black pajamas, mockingly and smilingly holds his mouth agape, like a crocodile waiting for his prey to enter freely of its own will. The Angel whispers with affectation, "It is you!"

With a mocking yet blank expression the seven-year-old points to himself.

The Angel points to the incarnated one as it explodes through the closed window, shrieking through the panes and shattering glass.

The Angel quirks its head towards the incarnate watcher, as its beautiful face grows wide like a jack-o-lantern filled with thin sharp teeth. Unsheathing its giant sword, the Angel thrusts, reaching out, and screaming with the righteousness of all heavenly fury; a jet stream, an explosion and ten thousand dying people screaming out at once for the blood of the young.

The seven-year-old laughs at the Angel as it slashes at him with his mystical sword. He is unharmed by it because he does not believe in Angels. He had indeed made it through the labyrinth of time and spiritual arbitrage back to his first save point, intact and once again fully incarnate. More Angels came through the window. They frowned and scowled with all their might, swinging their ghostly swords straight through him. The child yawns and gently rests back in his rocking chair, falling back asleep, realizing this confrontation may only have an outcome should he die someday. "That day will never come...again" he thought to himself with an assured grin.