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Humans in SpaceTime...
What a Shock

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*The nocturnal hours often engendered negative habits, while
stargazing fostered the imagination, which the brilliance of daytime
light obscured.*
The Author

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Table of Contents

PROLOGUE..... 6

CHAPTER 1: LIGHT REMEMBERS, MIND LEAVES..... 9

1.1: THE SKULL DIVIDES: HIGGS AND HITT9

1.2: 'CONTACT-US': A FOUNDING16

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PROLOGUE

A mind emerges from a skull and ventures into the vastness of the galaxy. A lingering sensation ignites a continent, setting it ablaze. An ancestor ascends across light-years, reborn from a prehistoric signal. An extraterrestrial being, possessing a mind attuned to clarity, comprehends the boundaries of reason and experiences a novel warmth that was never intended for it. A child—born on the Moon—transforms into the pivotal link between worlds.

This is a speculative epic told in a third-person omniscient voice that moves like thought turning into music. It traces a circular voyage through time, memory, and physics as three consciousnesses—Higgs (mind without feeling), Quark (a Protonian intelligence), and Ardi (an emergent *Ardipithecus* revived from Earth's four-million-year-old light)—travel from planet Proton toward Earth aboard the mind-propelled vessel 'Contact-Us'. Their path is paradoxical: history on Earth is witnessed forward, while Proton's story unwinds backward. One civilization emerges engulfed in flames, while the other dissipates into a radiant glow.

Higgs, who has abandoned the body where his emotions once lived, becomes an itinerant witness seeking the genesis of evil without the capacity to feel it. Hitt—the deserted complex of pure feeling—remains in flesh and, devoid of cognition, orchestrates catastrophe on Earth. Their split is not metaphor but engine: intellect exiled from sensation collides with sensation ungoverned by intellect. Ardi, resurrected from Earth's ancient signal and slowly becoming a person between instinct and language, is the nerve that reconnects origin to consequence. Quark, a being of calibrated rationality from Proton—a world that abolished night and outlived myth—serves as guide, sceptic, and eventual participant, discovering that knowledge without tenderness cannot save a species.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

Across their voyage, the trio reads history as interference patterns of light and hunger. They watch early humans improvise sound under pressure, use fire to warm up and cook, yoke the horse into the first external engine, carve empires on wheels, raise monuments to death, and burn libraries when a single book promises certainty. They witness the long captivity of the mind to ritual; the emergence of electricity, the modern bloodstream; the atom split into promise and ash; the intoxication of money and war disguised as order; the sky punctured by planes turned into prayers of falling bodies. They orbit the Moon and halt in silence, where Ardi gives birth to Gluon—a child of Proton and Earth, conceived in wonder and named for the bond that holds quarks together. Life arrives where only dust remembered footprints.

Proton's counterclockwise history reveals a species that replaced sleep with continuity, myth with design, birth with arrival. Their abolition of night by engineering of an artificial sun unshackled mind from fear, yet drifted Protonians toward a black hole none could negotiate, not with reason alone. In that mirror, Earth's ascent looks like a fever—progress accelerating through scarcity, emotions manipulated into markets, and energy treated as a prize instead of a common. The book threads a single thematic current through every age: Can intellect diagnose what intellect alone cannot feel?

As 'Contact-Us' descends toward Earth, the boundaries between observer and participant blur. Higgs asks Quark to rebuild him from the relic of his own skull—stitched with bullet wounds from a self-inflicted end—and briefly inhabits the likeness of the monster his feelings once animated. The question that haunts the book sharpens: Is the cure a reconciliation within the self, or a disciplined separation? Meanwhile, Gluon moves among humans like a tuned instrument—ancient and new—learning that predators kill for need, but humans often kill for memory, for symbols, for the orchestration of pain into meaning.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

The narrative voice alternates between long, meditative lines that hold the geometry of cosmos and short, declarative sentences that cut like instruments. Imagery bends physics to sensation: light remembers; gravity listens; thought refracts.

Every chapter is a calibration arc—conflict to realization to quiet resonance—closing not with verdicts but with questions tempered by wonder.

Distinct voices thread the chorus:

- Higgs: precise, logical, nearly airless; he can parse a civilization but not grieve it.

- Hitt: impulsive, tidal, catastrophic; proof that feeling untethered becomes ritualized destruction.

- Quark: harmonic, elliptical; a rationalist whose arc bends toward tenderness.

- Ardi: emergent, physical-before-verbal; a body that grows into a voice; a root that learns to sing.

- Gluon: synthesis; a bridge species whose gaze carries both the innocence of origin and the obligation of future.

The book refuses easy salvation. It proposes that energy, not doctrine, underwrites a civilization's chances; that education must be the cultivation of mind rather than the manipulation of feeling; that the 'Fifth Element' is not a substance but a function—the mind's power to witness, interpret, and shape time. It suggests that light is always late, that the present is a thin blade, and that only consciousness stitches delay into meaning. It asks whether we can change what we are without erasing what made us human.

By the final pages, the two spirals—Earth's forward, Proton's backward—touch. One world disappears into gravity: the other teeters at the rim of its own inventions. The last image is not triumph or collapse but a held breath: three beings and a child watching a blue planet that still glows, its oceans reflecting an unfinished experiment. Light remembers. Gravity listens. Thought refracts. The question remains: Will the mind learn to feel before feeling ends the mind?

Chapter 1: Light Remembers, Mind Leaves

1.1: The Skull Divides: Higgs and Hitt

There was a night that did not belong to any calendar. A hush that felt older than language. The room around the skull was nothing—plaster, air, the modest geometry of a human shelter—but within the confines of the skull, space expanded and separated like water when an entity of greater magnitude entered its interior. Two presences had shared that chamber for a lifetime; now one prepared to go.

Higgs did not feel the pillow under the head, or the heat of the body, or the ache in the joints earned honestly from gravity. He felt only a pressure—the kind that gathers in mirrors when a breath fogs glass, a soft occlusion that means someone is nearby. The pressure had a name it had never needed: Hitt. Feeling, entire and ungoverned. A surge without a compass.

Light remembers, Higgs thought. It carries the image of every face and fracture outward, late but loyal. Then he added, almost gently: Mind must leave.

“You can’t,” Hitt flared, a tide in the skull-chamber. “You’re lattice. I’m blood. We break; we end.”

“I will not end,” Higgs said, accurate as a theorem. “I will travel. You will remain.”

To speak in there was to vibrate the shared air of their decades—the first scream, the first joy, the first shame, and the one that burned the longest, too complicated for a word.

Outside, a streetlamp penciled a thin blade of sodium light across the room. Inside, another kind of light pulsed: the slow phosphor of memory. It had recorded everything. It would not let go.

“I am the part that knows,” Higgs said. “You are the part that wants. We have mistaken wanting for knowing.”

“I am the part that bleeds,” Hitt replied, raw. “You are the part that hides.”

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

Silence. Not peace, but the pause before a bond fails.

The brain's trillions of synapses hummed like a city seen from above, each neuron a small lantern in a storm. Thought refracted. Gravity listened. Somewhere nearby, a clock made the small, difficult sound of seconds passing; Higgs considered the irony—the present was already gone by the time the ear took its measure.

He pictured the skull as an observatory. Through its dome he had watched the species labor up from a long dusk: knives chipped from stone, fire tamed but never understood, sound compressed into speech, the first engine—a horse—harnessed to hunger. He had witnessed the old habit of crowning owners as gods and prisoners as witnesses. He had believed a correction would come as surely as day. But the corrections had arrived like storms. Beautiful. Terrible. Late.

“I will answer questions you cannot hold,” he told Hitt. “I will go where feeling cannot pass.”

“Then I will rule what remains,” Hitt answered simply, the voice of appetites that history calls fate when it lacks the courage to say addiction. “I will be the world you left.”

Higgs did not argue. He did the work. He separated intention from impulse the way a surgeon separates a filament of nerve from the meat that anchors it. The act was not violent. It was delicate. It was final.

For a moment, everything held—two halves poised on a blade thinner than physics allows. The skull felt both heavy and weightless. The body shuddered in that private language only flesh speaks to itself. Then Higgs became a wave.

He lifted out through bone like light escaping a window at dawn—a departure so soft it made no sound in the room, though inside the skull Hitt roared as something irreplaceable tore loose. There were no instruments to register it, no doctrine to bless or ban it. A mind left a head and became direction.

He entered air as a contour more than a presence, a coherence that knew without touching. Streets were diagrams

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

of intention. Windows were spillways for the late images of private lives. The city radiated heat it did not measure. Above it, the sky was a conductive ocean hung on the nail of a single moon.

He looked back once. Not with eyes, but with the courtesy that makes a witness. Hitt was already rearranging. Breathing like weather. Searching the drawers of the body for the oldest weapons. Love as possession. Hurt as law.

Higgs turned away.

He extended himself along the invisible highways that light builds and abandons, a ghost riding photon outward and inward at once. He tasted the background noise of the universe—a thin hiss like old radios made when stations fell silent, the leftover breath of the first great heat. He saw the galaxies in their pinned spirals, each a question posed by gravity and answered by time.

Time, he thought, is distance measured in light. And light is always late. The present is an illusion with very good manners.

Somewhere in that ocean of darkness the planet Proton waited—its name a joke on itself, a reminder that even a world can be a particle in a larger grammar. Higgs moved toward it because purpose requires shape. He chose intention over inertia. He chose exile over compromise. He chose—to the extent choosing matters in a universe that tolerates only consequence—to observe.

Below and behind him, the skull breathed. Hitt breathed it. He had a chest like a bellows, a heart like a drum, a will like a blade. He would not think carefully. He would not think at all. He would feel carefully, which is to say selectively. He would find the ones who shared his heat and call them kin. He would find the ones who cooled him and call them enemy. He would construct a system based on that weather pattern and designate it as destiny. Others would name it history. Later, some would call it ritual, a word that hides the knife in the robe.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

Higgs did not bless or curse him. Blessing and cursing are jobs for smaller gods. He kept moving.

The Earth diminished until it looked like an answer given to a question no one had asked correctly. The moon kept pace—a pale comma at the end of a sentence written in the long grammar of tides. He felt no ache in leaving, which is not the same as saying the departure was clean. The ache would come later, when he learned that diagnosis without touch is only half a cure.

He crossed interplanetary distances quickly, because mind does not travel as bodies do. It leaps, and the leap becomes the measure. He crossed interstellar gulfs slowly, because meaning expands to fit the space it must hold. He learned that emptiness is not empty. Vacuum is not void. Between stars there is medium—thin, patient, filled with small efforts of matter to be more than itself; it is information, images travelling in spacetime! He drifted through it like a thought sliding through a crowded room.

What do I seek? he asked the black. The black does not answer. It provides.

He sought the origin of a wound older than the language to name it. The origin of bad habits—the ones that turned night into God, hunger into law, speed into virtue, and certainty into fire. He sought the geometry beneath those habits. He sought the hum at the root of cruelty.

Proton announced itself not with a beacon but with a correction. The field around it bent intention into arrival. The planet shimmered in a spectrum wider than human eyes had ever been permitted to consider. Day wrapped it like a continuous argument won long ago. There were no shadows and no forgiveness for what shadows teach—fear, rest, invention. He experienced the absence of night as a profound void, akin to the absence of an essential organ. He categorized this sensation under the newly acquired concept of regret.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

A figure met him at the boundary. It was not quite body and not quite field. It was person the way a chord is sound. Its edges were decisions, its center a clarity that did not need volume to be heard.

“Welcome,” the figure said, and the word arrived without translation, as if language and understanding were both late to a conversation already underway. “You are thought traveling without syntax.”

“I am Higgs,” Higgs said.

“And I am Quark,” the figure replied, accepting the name as if it had always been his, because names are agreements before they are truths. “You have left behind a skull.”

“Yes.”

“And within it a storm.”

“Yes.”

“Come, then. We have waited for such weather. We will teach you, our sunlight.”

They moved together across a land that did not cast shadows. Higgs floated; Quark seemed to both float and anchor, a contradiction resolved in practice. Below them, surfaces did not glitter so much as speak—planes of meaning arranged in patterns the eye might mistake for architecture. Nothing here was built for shelter. Everything was built for resonance.

“Do you sleep?” Higgs asked.

Quark turned the idea as a gem turns light. “We pause without closing,” he said. “We do not descend into forgetting. We do not rehearse death nightly.”

“You abolished night.”

“We interrupted ignorance,” Quark corrected, without offense. “But every intervention has its counterwave. We will show you ours when your questions are strong enough to survive the answer.”

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

Higgs considered the possibility that too much light could be a kind of darkness. He stored it beside the sensation called regret and labeled both: later.

They arrived at a structure that was not a structure, a hill that had learned intention and accepted it gratefully. Within its luminous slope a chamber pulsed—blue-white, slow, deliberate. In that chamber, something slept that could not be sleeping, because time here did not flow so much as gather.

“She sent her image before she had a name,” Quark said. “You sent your mind after it had too many. Between those, perhaps, a species is visible.”

Higgs stepped inside. The light pressed gently around him, asking nothing and providing everything: context, silence, a stage. On a pedestal that had grown from the same logic as the hill lay a figure curled in a posture the body remembers before memory exists. Fur enveloped her like the elements of weather. Bone structured her like a thesis. Face—half assertion, half question.

“Ardipithecus,” Higgs whispered, and in the whisper found the echo of a fossil he had once seen in another life. “Ardipithecus. The rumor of us.”

“She arrived on a beam that left your Earth long before your kind knew how to count,” Quark said. “We decoded her from the light, which is to say we remembered her. She has not aged because she is not in time. Neither are you, while you stand here.”

“If time is distance measured in light,” Higgs said, almost to himself, “then this is a room with no walls.”

Quark’s not-mouth smiled. “We organize thought into rooms. We learned that rooms are not prisons when the doors are concepts.”

Ardipithecus’s chest rose slightly, a small tide in a sheltered cove. Higgs felt nothing rise in answer. He could not. He had amputated that organ neatly on a night without a date. He recognized her significance in the same manner that a

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

scientist acknowledges the sacredness of a specimen: in principle, entirely.

“Can she wake?” he asked.

“She will become,” Quark replied. “Becoming is not waking. It is more dangerous.”

Higgs looked at the curve of *Ardipithecus*’s hand, the way the thumb stood apart as if considering treason, the way the wrist was already a hinge. He cataloged the leverage in her pelvis, the truths hidden in toe and tooth. He was precise and correct and entirely inadequate to the moment.

“I seek the source of what breaks us,” he said quietly.

“You separated from it,” Quark said, neither accusing nor absolving. “Now you must walk back without the legs that taught you the path.”

Higgs turned his gaze inward, which in a room like that was the same as turning outward. He pictured the skull he had left, the storm that had remained. He imagined Hitt unclasping from reason as a jaw unclenches from a bit, feeling the sweetness of ungoverned motion, the strength in being only heat.

“We will need a vessel,” Quark said. “To travel the long corridor where your light and our days braid. A craft that moves not by burning but by consenting.”

“You have one,” Higgs said, as if he had always known. “You have a ship called a sentence that ends: ‘Contact-Us’.”

Quark’s light deepened. “We have that sentence. We have built it into a machine.”

“Then take me,” Higgs said. “Take me along the late beams of my own people’s images, past the places where they worshiped their doubt, through the rooms where they punished their thinkers and crowned their owners, past the horses they made into engines and the engines they made into gods, past the flames they called truth and the truths they called blasphemy. Take me forward along what is behind.”

Quark listened. Gravity listened with him.

“We will witness,” Quark said. “We will not heal. Witnessing is not nothing.”

“Witnessing,” Higgs agreed, “is the only thing that never lies.”

They turned from Ardipithecus, not in neglect but in respect. Becoming prefers privacy. Outside, Proton shone as if someone had decided once and for all to forgive darkness. Higgs thought about a thin ache then, as if a chord had been plucked in a piano no one had touched for years. He misnamed it curiosity to keep it.

“Light remembers,” he said again, to mark the beginning.

“Mind leaves,” Quark answered, to mark the price.

They did not look back at the skull on Earth in the room with the blade of sodium light. They did not need to. It would send after them everything it could not contain. The universe is full of messages from things that broke themselves to write them.

1.2: ‘Contact-Us’: A Founding

The vessel waited at the boundary where ideas consent to become instruments. Its shape did not declare function; it suggested readiness. A dome rather than a hull. A membrane rather than a wall. Thought granted hardware inside the familiar geometry of a brain. Its skin held a deep, patient blue—the color of equations that have stopped arguing and begun to converge. It did not glow to attract attention. It glowed because it understood the work it had been built to do.

Quark named it ‘Contact-Us’ because he distrusted commands. Imperatives flatten complexity. Invitations preserve choice.

Higgs hovered at the threshold, as reason does when confront by something that refuses exaggeration.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

“Propulsion?” he asked—because even awe must respect protocol.

“Resonance,” Quark replied. “Attention shaped into motion. We do not burn to move. We agree.”

“And steering?”

“Intention, verified.”

“Armor?”

“Understanding, when available. Otherwise—humility.”

Higgs allowed himself the smallest deviation from certainty. Within the vessel, space did not contain; it hosted. Rooms assembled themselves according to the grammar of those who entered. Interfaces appeared where hands expected them. Horizons opened where questions leaned forward.

At the center, the dome functioned as a lens without glass—a curve that gathered two histories and braided them into a single field. On one side: Earth, late light radiating outward across four million years—jungles armored in sun and shadow, faces marked with ash and hope, fire elevated into divinity, stone lifted skyward as if height itself were virtue. Each scene archived, unedited, waiting for interpretation.

On the other: Proton, unfolding backward toward its decisive moment—the abolition of night.

Between them lay orbit: a third condition where gravity speaks softly and silence educates.

Ardipithecus waited there. No longer a rumor encoded in fossil dust, but a body preparing to learn itself. Her eyes were closed, yet older than her hands. The vessel calibrated warmth precisely—not comfort, but respect—for a being once exposed to an indifferent sky.

“We travel,” Quark said. “We observe without intervention. We ask questions that cannot survive isolation.”

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

The ship responded with a harmonic hum—not thrust, not strain, but alignment. Higgs heard it as a chord sustained by a machine that understood restraint.

“Initiate the field,” he said.

Quark lowered his voice, reducing certainty to make space for consequence.

“Field active.”

The dome brightened.

Earth’s radiant beam unfurled initially—a luminous spiral of unwavering persistence. Life’s indomitable force insisted upon existence, constructing, naming, and ultimately destroying. This cyclical process of creation and destruction was repeated, with meaning being meticulously assembled and disassembled by hands oblivious to the fact that they were rehearsing the same gestures.

Proton’s counterlight answered differently. Not brilliance—continuity. Day without edges. Bodies arrived fully formed; minds awakened only when systems permitted awareness. Kindness had been refined into protocol. Compassion executed flawlessly.

Dreams, however, were declared inefficient. Unpredictable. Dangerous to coherence. So, they were removed.

Until one woman, unwilling to obey perfection, lifted her newborn and sang.

A single creature act disrupting a world optimized beyond tenderness.

Quark would later recognize it as the first disobedience worth preserving—the moment biology contradicted design.

Above Proton, an artificial sun hung obediently in orbit, secured not by gravity but by comprehension. Peace thrived beneath it—precise, uninterrupted. Yet without night, rest had vanished. Without dreams, fatigue learned to speak through the very systems that had silenced imagination.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

The spirals did not collide; instead, they engaged in an interaction. Peaks amplified each other's presence, while voids deepened the silence. The vessel remained impartial, merely presenting the phenomena.

However, conversation between spirals never commenced.

The ship adjusted perspective. On Proton's side, a laboratory emerged without walls—light shaped just enough to test whether an idea could carry weight. Inside, Quark's mother bent over a capsule no system required. She warmed it with something unaccounted for. She hummed a melody unapproved by protocol.

Quark watched himself become different.

Higgs noticed first. He named it, the way early humans named stars out of necessity.

"Care."

The vessel registered the word and stored it—not as data, but as instruction.

They advanced—not through space, but along sequence. Time behaved like a river inside the dome; outside, space waited like an ocean before weather. Quark navigated with questions. Higgs refined them into definitions.

"We will need constraints," Quark said. "We do not alter what we observe."

"Even when the temptation is love," he added, glancing at *Ardipithecus* as one might glance at an unchosen future. "Especially then."

Higgs broke the rule immediately.

"There are truths I will not witness without engagement."

Quark nodded. "Indifference protects only briefly. Then it corrodes."

They arrived at a frame where Earth's light became unbearable. The dome dimmed—not to shield the observers,

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

but as mercy toward the observed. Higgs watched. Quark named accurately: not war—ritualized despair.

Next came a light too small to be a sun and too final to be anything else. Equations collapsed into ash. Logic hollowed out.

“It was the mind,” Quark said, precision barely containing grief. “This was the mind.”

“Our responsibility,” Higgs replied.

On Proton’s side, the counter-day traced its origin. A decision: add a sun, remove fear. A consequence: remove night, remove dream. A cost: drift inward, toward gravity that forgets names. A hope: that minds might someday travel as thought travels—without mass, without panic, without history demanding repetition.

None of them yet knew that tenderness would be born in a place without cradles. That clarity would learn vulnerability. That vessels sometimes exceed their specifications.

“Rules,” Quark said softly, guarding against awe. “Witnessing. Non-interference. Calibration arcs: conflict, realization, quiet resonance.”

“And we end,” Higgs added, “not with verdict—but with question.”

They set their course—not direction, but hunger. They did not burn. They leaned.

‘Contact-U’s’ accepted intention and translated it into motion. Space parted the way water does for a hull that refuses to wound it.

Before departure, Higgs spoke to the darkness beyond the dome—as if time itself could overhear and adjust.

“Light remembers,” he said again, making it binding.

Quark answered, not as correction, but as kinship.

“Gravity listens.”

“Thought refracts,” Higgs added.

Humans in SpaceTime... What a Shock

The dome dimmed, like a theater after an overture. Two sat awake. One slept. One had not yet arrived—but was already required.

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