

Birth

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A story I planned to finish but never got past the first two chapters. Really liked what I wrote but just wasn't satisfied with the plot so it was dropped

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Chapter one: birth

I tic. Tubes. Tubes in my arms, my legs. Plastic tubes down my throat, supplying oxygen to my flesh. Sharp objects, I feel, are jabbed into my skin, drawing out metallic blood, purifying it. I feel no pain. My eyes are shut. Closed off from the outside world. I do not know what color they are, no one has told me. I feel a warm sensation. Bubbles ripple up my back, my chest. Rippling through my hair, my long, winding hair. It is entwined around my fingers, legs, arms, and neck. That, too, has no color; none that I am aware of.

My fingers twitch in anticipation. Today I will be born. I feel it within the glass cylinder that has been my home for thirty-seven years now. I cannot wait. I feel the warm sensation again as something touches the glass walls of my comfortable prison, their body heat warming the liquid as it twirls around me. I am simply floating. Floating within my liquid home, surrounded by analeptic bubbles of air. The rippling sensation is the only thing keeping me from eternal sleep. They spark my interest. Only if I could open my eyes and see what the tiny chambers of air look like.

I am mechanical. My metallic blood rushes through my body, cooling my insides. I want so much to open my eyes. But I cannot. They have been sealed. The humans outside have made them close. I could not open them if I wish. They programmed them shut. Besides actions, I have learned the basics. What

humans are, what oxygen is, what I am. Words like glass water flesh tubes plastic I have learned. I know their meanings, along with many others. Boy: a male child. Girl: a female child. Man: an adult male. Woman: an adult female. The words female and male mean nothing to me. They simply distinguish different types of humans. However, the words child and adult are remembered.

My stiff lips curl back into an awkward shape that I have learned. Something called a smile. I smile for I am happy. Did you know that happy is how you feel when something that you like is shown to you or done for you? I learned that three years ago. I still smile at the thought of being happy. I crave new words. I want to be like humans and am slowly becoming one. More words rush into my programming. Sleep: a natural, regularly recurring condition of rest for the body and mind, during which the eyes are usually closed and there is little or no conscious thought or voluntary movement, but there is intermittent dreaming. The word dreaming confuses me. That is, until the definition enters my system. Dreaming: a sequence of sensations, images, and thoughts that pass through a sleeping person's mind. Such wonderful words; I drink them in.

Sounds. Human sounds. They seem to be telling me something. I listen but only understand a few words. The human language is so complex. Amalgamated. I must learn more. I concentrate hard and pictures of bright lights fill my mind. I am within the instrument that gives me words. My heart skips a beat as I come across thousands and thousands of words and definitions. I reach out with my hands, unconsciously grasping the words, drawing them in. So many words. It excites me.

But suddenly they fade! The white words fade to black, blending in with the dimming lights. I no longer feel the presence of knowledge. My machinery turns within my head. It turns faster and faster, growing uncontrollable. I wince. Pain. No, not pain, wrong word. Confusion. Something I am unhappy about. My smile twists out of shape into reflection. A frown. The knowledge was slipping away and I was growing dizzy. I was learning too much. I had done that before. I was punished for the previous attempt; the punishment being unable to learn anything new for a period of seven days.

The flashing lights disappear and I slump forward, my machinery growing limp. More punishment. More severe. I would not be born today. I did not do something that made the humans outside my prison happy. I made them unhappy and I was sorry.

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A period of twelve days passed and I was finally given another word. Birth: the act of coming into life. I am excited by this new word. It means something deeper than I make it out to be. The meaning soon comes. The liquid in my glass cylinder begins to abate and I feel my long hair become flat as it presses against my bare skin. I feel a strange sensation as the tube down my throat is drawn out. I gasp. Fresh, new, clean air enters my robotic lungs. I still cannot see. My eyes have not been allowed to open.

The steel mechanisms in my arms begin to work as the water dropped to waist level. It feels strange. I feel so heavy. My waterlogged hair would have pulled my head back if it were not for the robotic elements in my body. They alone hold my head up as the weight became greater and greater. My legs almost collapse as the last of the water exits the chamber with a gurgled slurp. My eyes are still closed to the world.

I sense humans nearby. The glass wall separating them from me open and I feel warm, strong arms grabbing onto my arms, legs, and middle. My body goes limp as I am helped from my prison. I feel a force around me, pulling me down. I do not know what it is called. The sharp instruments are pulled from my skin and I no longer feel the presence of plastic.

I am moved somewhere and set down on something. I think it is a bed for I am lying down. However,

steel covers the surfaces and it feels cold. I try and draw away from the lack of heat but I cannot move. It is then that the wonderful sensation of sight comes upon me. My eyes open, slowly. I am very happy. I smile. I can see. I see faces. They are also smiling. I try and sit up but they hold me back. I reach out a hand, they replace it to its original position. I feel free. Sight is wonderful.

The humans' hands run down the length of my body, wiping something slippery off. They move over every square inch of my body, touching my skin. It arouses no sensations. After ten minutes, I am allowed to stand. One of the humans, who has long, soft, brown hair (during those ten minutes I learned colors), dazzling blue eyes, and soft, pale skin, came up to me. The human said something, half in words I did not understand, half in words I did. But, it didn't matter. The human was smiling. Benign.

I am female. These words I understood. I reach out towards the female's round, kind face and stroke her almond-colored hair. The strands slip through my fingers, so soft. Then someone else came up to me, its white teeth displayed between rosy lips in a smile.

I am male. I clap my hands together, overjoyed with the knowledge of different races. This male man had short, wiry, gray hair and gray eyes. His face was long with a high jawbone. His chin jutted out and he stroked his bristled beard before taking my hand, leading me over to glass. The glass is not curved but, rather, it reflects images. The glass revealed a medium height young woman with incredibly long, black hair. The young woman's eyes were black with a hint of blue in them. Her skin was almost white, making her look awkward. I stepped up the glass, the girl copying my movements, and touched it with the tip of my fingers.

Mirror, the woman beside me said, wrapping a length of cloth around my naked body. It felt warm, like another human had been wearing it. I turned from the glass, the mirror, and looked around the room. I was standing in a large dome, clear glass acted as the ceiling and gray, steel beams lent support, stopping the whole dome from caving in.

Within the dome, many humans were standing. Several just looked at me, unblinking, as I took unsteady steps forward, the human woman at my side. Other humans were working on machines, giant machines that took up large amounts of space. Their fingers clicked up and down, pressing plastic keys. They moved at a blur as they worked. I began feeling dizzy so I staggered over to the steel bed, sitting down on it and closing my eyes.

She is learning too much. The human woman's voice was high and sweet. She sounded happy, which was a good thing. She must sleep.

Her words lulled me as I lay there, feeling the steel as it removed all the excess heat from my mechanical body, cooling me. It felt good for I was getting hot. The water in which I had been imprisoned in for so long never allowed me to become hot. It was perfect. I saw the kind woman's face and the happy man's smile as I slept. Perhaps these were dreams? I would have to ask. But how? I could utter no sound. I didn't know how to talk. My robotic tongue felt stiff and hard. How would I ever make it move as swiftly as a human's? I would worry about it when I opened my eyes again.

For now, I will sleep.