

WARD & BRITTON

ENERGETICS

THE FIRST ORDER



from the new series

THE FOUR ORDERS
OF INHERENT FREEDOM

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Energetics: The First Order



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—Natalie Fuhr-Salvatore, Elation Press

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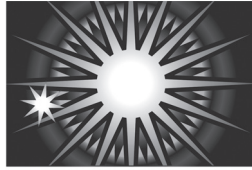
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*Our sincere gratitude
to our two editors:*

○

*Natalie Fuhr-Salvatore
and
Kurt Jensen*

“There exist four, maybe five, higher Orders of electrodynamics—a higher group symmetry —that will definitely alter the course of human progress.”

“Tene lupum auribus!”

Forward

The Four Orders of Inherent Freedom is a global wake-up call.

Somewhere in our past, we were wrenched from our correct timeline and forced into our current reality. Whether deliberate or accidental, it was a universal mistake. And now, as we stand weak and exposed, the wolves of destruction are upon us!

Are we willing to fearlessly grab hold of their ears in order to face them, and possibly tame them? Or will we be devoured as we turn to run?

The Four Orders series tells of certain individuals who grab on and hold fast! In the face of adversity they pool their mettle and rise above expectations. Through them, alternate scientific methods are studied and new inventions are spawned that enable us to move closer to our true realities.

In the process, we are given the opportunity to investigate the altruistic side of human nature to uncharted depths. We learn to explore and synthesize new heights of self-actualization that lead to a collective metamorphosis.

The novels also describe the personal, sociological and geopolitical impact of each order as it is revealed and implemented. They are a journey into the future of inherent freedoms that we rediscover through courage and innovative thought.

By facing and overcoming longstanding fears, is there really a possibility of healing our present, engineering our future, and, in the process, orchestrating a path to genuine peace?

The answer is, yes!

On this fresh evolutionary path, global society begins to experience a regenerative process. We are elevated beyond religious dogma and political agendas, while the shackles of our current and restrictive paradigm are shed. Step by step, *Order by Order*, we progress towards a new enlightenment. Led by our ability to imagine, combined with our tenacious drive towards self-improvement, we are drawn into the unknown and launched toward our true destiny.

The journey is not effortless; but the rewards are bountiful. We must be willing to confront ourselves; we must be responsive to our powers within; we must act wisely; and, we are obliged to be good stewards and take responsibility for our future.

We must continue an outpouring of gratitude to our historical liberators; but, now, *each* of us must act as they did.

Before it's too late!

Do this, and a revolutionary attitude of self-determination is inevitable.

Abandon your lethargy!

Claim your right to inherent freedom!

Grab the wolf by the ears *and hold on!*

ENERGETICS

T H E F I R S T O R D E R



LIBERATION FROM
LIMITED THINKING & ACTION

The First Order permits us to tap into the unlimited power of the universe, to emancipate all of mankind from their keepers, and enable us with personal empowerment to choose our own destiny and the means to achieve it.

1965

Chapter 1

January 9, On the Continent of Antarctica

It has begun.

“Komander!” Dimah was gripped with apprehension. “I’m detecting longitudinal and negative T-wave-pair generation.” Although he’d grown up in the Ukraine, his Russian was impeccable.

“Move to Phase II, Dimah, and power up the laser,” Orlov called back.

Concealed behind a craggy, snow-covered peak, this pair of Russian interlopers observed the progress of an experiment that was taking place in a huddle of buildings a mile away. Their hand-held equipment was sophisticated and precise.

Grabbing the high powered binoculars, Colonel Gregori Orlov positioned himself above Dimah at the top of the vertical peak that separated them from the base-camp in the distance.

Superior intelligence, faultless resourcefulness, and ruthless soldiering had easily earned Orlov his rank as Colonel. However, this man-of-mettle was, at heart, a philosopher. And as he peered across the sheer white snow-field, at their target, he saw their new future . . . a mended Mother Russia.

Surveying their target—which had begun to glow due to the corona discharge—Dimah carefully positioned the laser, aiming the cross-hairs on the central dome.

Orlov continued his instructions. “Set the timer to trigger automatically in exactly thirty seconds. And, Dimah!”

“Da?”

“Take cover!”

“Yes, Commander.”

Zero displayed on their digital timer, and they braced for the anticipated explosion.

Within seconds, the cold air around them compressed with an ear shattering quake, forcing their lungs to empty.



A few hours earlier and a mile away, enveloped in the warmth of his success with the progress to date of *Project Edelweiss*, Dr. Henry Dyer defied a stiff and bitter wind that swept across the helipad.

Six months ago he had enthusiastically accepted the position of Designated Overseer of *Edelweiss*—the conversion of a remote Antarctic U.S. Navy weather station into a state-of-the-art research facility. The purpose of the facility was to perform one single experiment, targeted at producing the world’s first cheap source of clean and inexhaustible power. Bound to this, however, was the inevitability of crippling the current balance of military and geo-political power. Consequently, security was to be stringent and enforced on the notion of *shoot first, ask questions later*.

So, under heavy guard, the docks had been a blur of Navy cargo ships, arriving and departing around the clock, stocked with metal containers and teeming with technicians running through their checklists and allocating space in the *HUB* for the countless modules of equipment.

The *HUB* was a large dome that had been built by a small city of military engineers. It was prosaically labeled as such given that it was encircled by six smaller domes at equidistant intervals, each at the end of a path that originated from the central building, resulting in a wheel formation.

Despite the mundane name, the HUB not only housed the critical engine of the experiment—a refitted submarine nuclear reactor—but also contained the living essence of the venture in the form of brave men and women blessed with remarkable minds, and each who embraced *blue ocean* visions.

Following the completion of the HUB, the *Experiment* began to arrive in pre-assembled sections. Under the express supervision of Dyer, the sections were off-loaded from the U.S.S. Jupiter with predictable military precision. Seven weeks of grueling labor ensued: each module was secured around the reactor, and then relentlessly tested, until each was deemed functionally flawless and declared operational.

Now, at the end of this half year of preparation, in the dead of night, Dyer witnessed the departure of the engineering team from the small heliport, and awaited the arrival of his research team. They had been cloistered just offshore inside a secure chamber in the bowels of the U.S.S. Cochran. Blinking rapidly, to stave off a corneal freeze, he watched the starry expanse overhead envelop the lights of one helicopter while those of the incoming bird steadily grew into a new dazzle of light swinging down from the sky.

With the touchdown of the Chinook, and the winding down of the dual rotors, the researchers exited the helicopter—swift and sure—eager to assess the equipment. They were accompanied by Vice Admiral Demming—an old, yet sophisticated and highly decorated, sea-dog.

Dyer knew Demming by reputation only. In his early years he'd been known as the *Gentle Genius*, for in addition to his charitable regard for humanity, he had an innate ability to comprehend and analyze vast quantities of knowledge and easily visualize solutions. As he matured, his insightfulness grew into wisdom. And in his later years he was recognized as a pillar of moral rectitude.

For this reason, from the project's inception, Dyer had expressly requested that Demming be brought onboard as a joint-overseer. And now, here he was, standing at the edge of a glacial desert, exchanging a warm hearty handshake with a legend.

Following their friendly introductions, they chatted easily while they watched the team methodically calibrate, recalibrate and meticulously check

the precision of each section, *ad infinitum*.

“I wish Tesla were here to see this!” Dyer remarked to the Vice Admiral standing next to him.

“It is a magnificent display of progress, yes?” Demming was sufficiently impressed. He winked and continued, “I’m guessing he’s looking on with relish.”

“Dr. Dyer.” A voice was heard over the intercom. “We are ready for the sequencer, Sir.”

Dyer, alone, was to secure the final component—a program-controlled sequencing device provided by NASA. Once in place, the two leaders breathed a sigh of relief and retired to the relatively comfortable control room. The first test firing was to begin at 0700 hours—in less than one hour.

If the experiment was successful, Demming would transmit a single word to the War Room of the Pentagon, INDEPENDENCE. Upon failure, the communication would be BUSTER, and the base would be dismantled and returned to its former glory as a weather station.

At 0650, Dyer leaned into the console microphone and said, “Team, last check for Go Status on power-up sequence.”

They watched the lights on the status board switch from red to green as each station silently reported their Go/No-Go status. When all indicators shone green, the lead tech announced, “Power-up sequence initiating.”

The whine of the electric generators gradually increased as they ramped up to maximum speed and charged the massive capacitor-banks housed in the six out-buildings.

Dyer, had one hand on a key and the other outstretched, enticing Demming. “Vice Admiral, we would be honored.”

His face lighting, the Vice Admiral placed his hand on the remaining key. From many years of battling narrow-minded dogma, Demming was visibly and emotionally moved. *Limitless, clean energy!* He saw the embryo of a new world in his mind.

In a devout half-whisper, he gave a personal testament. “It is with humility, Mr. Tesla . . . a tribute to your true genius, and as an absolution for our prior ignorance . . . that we perform this act.”

At any other time, Dyer might have thought Demming to be maudlin, but not today. Rather, his face flushed with pride and a bead of sweat found its way down his temple.

After the 3-2-1 countdown, the two men turned their respective keys.

With a thunderous boom, the capacitors discharged their stored potential into the longitudinal wave projectors, which in turn were trained on inert gases in an expansive glass sphere ringed with a maze of caduceus coils. Instantly, the sphere glowed with a bright white light.

“We’ve got power!” A voice crackled over the intercom.

“Roger that. Stand by.” With a slow exhale and a touch of reverence, Dyer activated the second switching device. When engaged, it successfully caused the harvested energy from the coils to loop back and replace the original generator input.

A revolutionary self-sustaining energy system had been created.

Mutually astonished, the two men *felt*, more than *heard*, an attenuated electrical hum pulse through their bodies while they willingly submitted their inventive spirits to be bathed in the luminescence of their new creation.

They let their imaginations feast on the spectacle.

“Brilliant.” Dyer scratched this singular word from his dry throat with some difficulty.

“We’ve done it!” Demming’s joy was indefinable.

They turned to each other and feverishly shook hands.

“I am pleased to report, we have achieved sustained over-unity!” Dyer felt young again.

“Indeed! *This will make quite a pile of scrap!*” Demming said. He was referring to a story of C. F. Scott saying this very thing to Tesla, after Tesla commented that he could scrap all the heat-engines in the world with the invention of his turbine. Aware of this anecdote, Dyer chuckled.

Then, as if coming to his senses, Demming headed for the door. “If you will excuse me, Doctor, I have a very important message to send.”

As he departed to deliver the good news, Dyer was left to gaze with amazement, into the white radiance, joyfully contemplating the emergence of a new world system.



The Vice Admiral boarded the Chinook destined for the U.S.S. Cochran still positioned in the bay. It was a short jaunt, and as the helicopter descended onto the expansive deck, he turned to gaze back at the dome. “Are we worthy now, Nikola?” Gratified with an assumed positive response from his imaginary interchange, and anticipating a similar jubilation from the Pentagon, he disembarked. And as the ground crew chained the bird to the moorings, he strode proudly across the carrier’s deck towards the communication center.

But, a few steps short of the hatch, a catastrophic explosion emanating from the HUB hit him broadside. The black sky was licked by white flames—like Tesla’s brain on fire—and the ship heaved and pitched with such intensity that he was slammed up against the superstructure, and then bounced across the deck—like a marble in a pin-ball machine.

Then, suddenly, as Demming scrambled for a foothold, a hush blanketed the air—but only for the briefest of moments. The resulting vacuum that followed inhaled the stillness and sucked him up against the landing gear of the Chinook, to which he clung, desperately fighting for breath. With arms and legs locked fast, and squinting across the rolling ocean, through driving sea-spray, he witnessed a maelstrom rising.

The helicopter screeched sideways across the deck and then began to rise like a kite from its anchor. Demming held on. Then, with the force of a whip, he was yanked from his sanctuary and twirled through space as the ship listed hard one last time. Wrenched from the deck, the Vice Admiral, the helicopter and all hands turned into tinker-toys in a toddler’s tantrum.

“Tantalus! Oh, God save us!” The faint words were lost off Demming’s lips as he, along with the entire ship, was violently sucked under the roiling waves.



Back across the ice-field, Colonel Orlov had been tossed from his perch and driven into a crevice by hurricane-force winds.

With hips wedged tightly between the rocks, he was immobile from the

waist down; and like a puppet with a vindictive master, his upper body flailed about as he was pierced and clobbered by ice shards and rogue projectiles.

Through slotted eyes, he witnessed a macabre dance between Dimah and the wind. His feet had been swung up above his head by a vortex of air and his body was repeatedly slammed into the jagged mountain face. Upon each impact, a profusion of blood twisted upwards, vanishing into the airstream. Orlov looked on, helpless and horrified, as his comrade's warped form was ultimately driven out of sight over a serrated precipice.

Straining to free himself, Orlov was, again, slugged hard. This time the offender was a small granite slab that made contact squarely on the side of his head. Deaf and disoriented, he fought to remain conscious, but all went black.

He did not know how much time had passed, but when Orlov awoke, the torrent had subsided. His breathing—slow but steady—was all he heard; the rest of the world was silent.

Acute, searing pain spidered through his entire body. In this moment, when clear thinking was paramount, he felt alone and confused. He, a man of few emotions, was moved. Tears burned his eyes and he heard an agonized whimper escape his throat with each wiggle and shift, as he strained to finally dislodge his pelvis from the rocky vice.

His deafness amplified the awareness of his pain, fatigue and bewilderment; they were all strangely palpable as he dragged himself on his elbows towards Dimah's lifeless body—a barely recognizable mass of human pulp. He reached for what remained of his comrade's hand, and whispered, "Goodbye my friend."

Then, shaking tears from his face, he assessed his own injuries. They were extensive: the skin on his fingertips and palms was stripped off, most of the flesh on his left side was lacerated—smarting wildly from the wind—and a gaping cut ran a jagged path from below his left temple to his earlobe. But the most heinous injury was a wide bloody gash where, from just above his left hip, the flesh had been torn open, right down to his knee.

The pain was excruciating.

In order to remain conscious, he kept his breath shallow; yet, each lungful of air placed nearly unbearable tension on his flogged muscles and torn

ligaments. He felt like chine headed for the oven.

The binoculars still trailed, unceremoniously, from his neck, but from where he lay, he did not need them. He could easily see past the peak, which now resembled a shaved-off stump, completely void of snow or ice. He gazed in disbelief at the degree of damage they'd caused.

The base camp, in its entirety, was gone. Nearly a radial mile of ice and snow—right down to the ground—was also missing. Once more, his unflappable constitution was shaken. He quivered.

“Success, Dimah,” he whispered.

Slowly, he inched closer to his comrade. The lower half of his survival suit had been completely shredded, revealing stars tattooed on both knees: a symbol of his rank as a *made* man within his elite organization, and, ironically, also a sign that he would never be brought to submission. But with each inch traveled, the torture performed on his exposed wounds caused involuntary obeisance to the elements revealed through long sorrowful cries.

Fighting to survive and nearing exhaustion—both physical and emotional—Orlov searched for the transceiver tethered to the inside of his breast pocket. Gingerly, he raised the device to his lips and in one weak breath recited the rescue code: “*Troika, Troika, Troika.*”

And there, from the center of the red pool—where Dimah's crumpled torso had bled out the last of its life—both of their broken bodies dissolved silently into thin air.

1973

Chapter 2

March, Holloman Air Force Base

Colonel Montag of Strategic Air Command remained in the observation booth, alongside his team, as the lozenge-shaped craft gently descended to the ground and then silently propelled itself towards them into the empty bay. Once inside, Montag gave his assistant, Major Jessie Paxton, the order to close and seal the hangar doors.

The exterior of the craft had an oily rainbow patina that disappeared when the engine was powered down. As always, their heart rates rose slightly as they observed the familiar articulated staircase extend gradually from the side of the craft, until it touched down onto the painted concrete floor.

“This is it, boys and girls!” Montag wheezed.

A hush fell over them as a pair of pilots emerged, followed by a third in tow. They had appropriately been dubbed the *Grays* due to the light, neutral color of their skin. They were lithe with large bobbing heads that made them look like dandelions swaying in the wind; and stemming from their graceful movements, they conveyed an appealing sense of fragility.

However, every move these visitors made was the result of significant

calculation and consideration. Nothing about them was ever impulsive. They stood and waited on protocol, sniffing the air around them.

“That is just downright spooky!” Montag said. “It’s like they can see into our souls from our scent. I’ll never get used to it.”

Paxton agreed but said nothing as they both headed down to the bay. Montag’s trust of the *Grays* had always been nonexistent. For this reason, on a number of occasions, he had locked horns with his more hopeful peers. But it wouldn’t be long before he would be proven right, and at an outrageous cost.

The two officers adjusted their bio-suits and waited to enter the coupling chamber where two more *Grays*—the survivors from a crash earlier that year—were already seated, waiting to be reunited with their *brethren*.

“Clear.” Montag heard through his earpiece.

“Roger that. Let’s go greet our *guests*.”

PRESENT DAY

Chapter 3

January 14, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Groggily, Jordy asked, “Is it push-button?”

He wondered if his wife had premade their coffee the previous night, awaiting a mere flick of the *on* switch.

“Nope!” Jenna pulled the comforter up to her chin. After a few minutes of inactivity, she nudged her husband lovingly and, in her deliciously-husky morning voice, said, “It’s Saturday. Your turn to *squeeze the weasel*.” They snickered at their java-joke—the phrase was in reference to an outrageously expensive coffee bean processed through the bowels of the civet cat. But *squeezing the civet* didn’t have the same verbal flare.

So, bleary-eyed, Jordy dragged himself to the kitchen, prepped and turned on the coffee. Next, he arranged some raw, pre-packaged cinnamon buns on a baking sheet and stuffed them in the oven. Then slumping onto a kitchen bar-stool, he began paging, dispassionately, through the morning paper.

His eyes strayed to the blue-jays fussing on the window sill, skittish from the cold. *Just another gray, intensely desolate January morning in Cambridge, Massachusetts*, he thought. Both he and Jenna found the climate harsh, but it

was their hometown filled with memories, so they decided to stay.

While half his brain was counting the number of mountain-ash berries that had blown onto the sill, the other half was recalling his life as a young student—when unyielding ambition and an incurable desire for exploration were the conditions of his existence. He had nurtured grand aspirations of spearheading an impressive project in some high tech company, and envisioned himself being graced with laurels amidst wild applause, while humbly accepting a Nobel Prize. All to be wrapped up in a platinum parachute and stamped as Legend.

But instead, he was glaringly aware that his former desires were past fantasies, not future possibilities. This unfulfilled dream caused a cascade of emotion to wash over him like bucket of ice water. As a chill raced up his spine, the winter scene invaded his daydream, and he was gratefully brought back to the fragrant aroma of dark coffee brewing and the exotic scent rising from the oven.

Mmm. Cinnamon.

The smell launched him into an entirely new reverie, one of his Uncle Eddie. This man had almost single-handedly saved him from a childhood depression by instilling the sense of wonder back into his life.

Jordy grew up as an only child. His father, George, was an abusive, unemployed ship builder turned professional alcoholic, and his mother, Samantha, worked two clerical jobs to keep the family afloat.

Jordy was inevitably fast asleep when his mother would arrive home from work; but early every morning, in pitch black, he would feel a kiss on his forehead, and the words, *My sweet Jordan. One day, your unique spirit will rise.* This saintly apparition of a mother that floated in and out of his consciousness, this gentle woman—smelling like rosewater—who would momentarily rest her warm cheek on his, was the only person who made him feel extraordinary.

That is, until his uncle came along—his own personal Robin Hood.

Eddie, Samantha's brother, was an accomplished baker, and many Saturdays before sunrise, Jordy's nostrils were filled with the smell of yeast and fresh cinnamon sticks, pop-overs, sticky buns or cat pies. Sleepy-eyed, he'd make his way to the dimly lit kitchen and fall into his uncle's open

arms—*Just like being wrapped in warm dough*, Jordy remembered.

Eddie had been forced to drop out of school to support his three sisters and his delinquent dad. But he'd been destined to be an explorer—his personal interests were too kaleidoscopic to be contained within a life of mediocrity. So, after years of these binding responsibilities, his yearning for adventure finally triumphed. He packed his bags, joined the merchant marines and began his journey as a self-made man.

Jordy, being an impressionable eight year old, had been devastated by his uncle's disappearance. He remembered looking to his father for similar companionship. But, more often than not, he had received the back of George's hand in lieu of any form of affection. To say that George had little interest in his son would be generous. So, brief as they were, Jordy continued to cherish his mother's morning comforts.

Nevertheless, to Jordy's delight, that next summer, his uncle materialized on their doorstep. He took Jordy's hand, waltzed him directly into the kitchen and began concocting his magnificent pastries. As his hands braided the dough his tongue wove tremendous stories of his adventures on the high seas: coldblooded pirates, hidden treasures, alluring courtesans, outrageous storms and harrowing battles. His voice was enticingly bombastic; and every now and then, to Jordy's delight, he'd stop working the dough to launch into larger-than-life gesticulations to bolster the drama.

Spellbound, Jordy lost himself in these yarns, fleshing them out with his own childlike imaginary details of gold buttons, shiny scabbards, bad-breathed buccaneers, and beautiful girls with gold-embroidered bodices. Although, the meaning of a *bodice* escaped him, he imagined it to be a large chest full of jewels; because his uncle always said that whenever he bought them a drink they would let him fish out the rubies from their bodice. Jordy thought, *He must be rich as a king!*

Jordy returned briefly to reality to rescue the buns from the oven. Then his brow knitted as he recalled the worst day in his life. In innocence, he had inquired of George, *Is mom a courtesan?*

Where the hell did you learn that word? George's tongue was instantly on fire.

Uncle Eddie said that . . .

In one swift motion his father smacked him hard on the side of the head and hollered up to the second floor, *Eddie!*

Jordy's head had bounced off the sideboard along with a stack of ceramic cups that rattled from their shelf, breaking into shards around him.

Shaking his head, he pulled himself up and leaned against the cupboard, terrified.

George glared at his son, demanding, *What did he tell you?*

I . . . he didn't say anything about mom, Jordy stammered as he felt the prickling of blood vessels burst in his temple.

Don't lie to me! George was ferocious. His reactions were always disproportionate to the cause, especially when his mom wasn't around.

He . . . I . . . he said a courtesan is an exotic beauty. And . . . mom is beautiful . . . but, Dad! Jordy pleaded through tears. *I don't know . . .*

Impatient and infuriated, George ran up the stairs and pulled Eddie from the bathroom. Luckily, his uncle had only been washing up. George literally dragged him down the front steps and onto the street—cussing with words Jordy had never heard before. As Jordy scampered after his uncle, George turned hard on his heel and shot back into the house.

Eddie's eyes welled up with tears as he saw the light drain from his nephew's eyes. He squatted down and opened his arms. Jordy ran to him but was intercepted by his father who had magically reappeared, and was throwing his uncle's small, worn leather suitcase directly into Eddie's chest.

George roared Jordy back into the house with predictable condemnation, *Room! Now!*

With hands over his ears and tears flying in every direction—like a tiny angel buffeted by the storms of hell—he was borne up to the safety of his room on the wake of his father's shout.

George, still on the street, continued to watch Eddie's backside until he was well out of view, and from Jordy's recollection, that was the last time the two men ever spoke.

Monster! Jordy lay on the floor dizzy and panting. He was confused and horrified—confused with his father's actions and horrified that he, himself, had caused the excommunication of his best friend and, as he saw it, the condemnation of his own spirit.

He felt ashamed of something he couldn't quite explain, and that night—for the first of many nights—he cried himself to sleep.

In the days to come, Jordy spent much of his free time in thought. When he wasn't pining for his minstrel uncle, he was fantasizing about his father. He imagined that George was proud of him. He wished George had been sitting in the front row, cheering louder than the rest, when he won first prize in the school math competition; and he wished that one day he'd come home from school and his dad would surprise him with a trip to the Boston Zoo! And the lions and tigers would stare in envy as father and son taunted them with their ice cream cones.

But abuse by George, in one form or another, routinely ruptured his utopia. How he mourned his missing uncle.

Until, early one morning, just before dawn, he heard someone calling out a made-up bird sound: *Cheep-cheep-cheeperoo!* Jordy gave a muffled squeal of joy as he stuck his head out the window, and there he was, with a white long-sleeved shirt and his arms outstretched—*Like a holy angel right from the Bible.* His mother used to say that every time the local grocer dropped by with extra vegetables. *They will only rot on my shelves, Mrs. Hanford,* he'd say. Jordy didn't quite know what the word *charity* meant, but he sure was grateful for that holy angel's mashed potatoes.

He tore out of his pajamas and pulled on his t-shirt and shorts and slinked down the stairs barefoot. But getting past George that morning was no big feat—he lay on the living room sofa, still crippled by alcohol and deafened by his own snoring. Even so, Jordy tiptoed past him then sprinted down the front steps to liberty to receive his *holy angel* hug.

Placing his small hand in his uncle's leathery mitt, they meandered through the woods that lined his backyard, passed by the Rod & Gun Club, and onwards to a small clearing under the boughs of a big old pine near a pond. His father had no control over the forest, and for the next few years, that became their clandestine meeting place.

Each time, Eddie would arrive with half a dozen fresh cinnamon buns, a thermos filled with hot chocolate and an old wool blanket. They'd spread the blanket beneath the pine boughs, lounge in the coolness of the shade, and journey to their *other* world.

As the years passed and Jordy grew older, his uncle's story-telling transformed from grandiose and whimsical to beguiling, and cleverly hemmed with wisdom. The stories had also shifted from pirates and battles to marvelous cultures filled with shaman, grand rituals and the search for enlightenment. They had an underlying significance that Jordy couldn't quite grasp, but in the course of it all, the wheels of his imagination continued to spin and love for his uncle continued to grow.

But the summer that Jordy turned twelve, his uncle failed to appear under his window. Every day after school he went expectantly to the forest. He'd sit beneath the shady pines, breathing in the cool air—musty with early signs of leaf-decay—imagining he was only moments away from his *holy angel* hug.

He figured his uncle must have been delayed in some far-off royal court, or by some saucy harlot—by age twelve he knew what *that* was—and with his stomach knotted in anticipation, he awaited the stories.

But instead, he would skip a few stones across the pond, or sit and listen to the loons until the sky dimmed. And then he'd shamble off home, crestfallen and alone. It wasn't until much later that he would learn what had become of his beloved uncle.

And now, he sat in his own kitchen, an adult, in his late fifties, graying hair, carrying a mere fifteen to twenty extra pounds around his midriff, and still loving that smell of cinnamon. He blew the sadness from his nose and then became aware of *Techichi*—*Cheech* for short—Jenna's yappy Chihuahua, shivering against his ankle. This was typically the dog's first attempt at announcing his need for bladder relief.

But Jordy's eyes wandered back to the window and, while still dabbing his eyes from his uncle's memory, his thoughts turned once again to the sound of a jubilant crowd cheering his own genius.

A sharp, high-pitched yelp cut his self-adulation short.

If you ignored the dog's second warning, you knew there would be a *clean up on aisle five*. So Jordy conceded defeat and tended to the dog.

He swore Cheech smiled at him as he walked over and opened the door to his winter water-closet. He closed the door behind the little scalawag and returned to doctor up two mugs of coffee with heavy cream and brown sugar.

Along with a steaming roll slathered in butter, he took coffee into Jenna,

and as he was about to set them on her crowded night-stand, he heard her warn, “Not on the Mondrian please!”

He swerved the cup and plate away from the glossy hard-cover to a new landing spot: a dog-eared pile of magazines. Jenna had previously been a renowned archaeologist, acquiring her fame in an eastern dig, but on retirement—tired of sifting through old bones—took up a position as a part time art dealer for the Boston Museum of Art. Although in love with her job, weekend mornings were her time of respite—escaping into her steamy, delicious coffee and mental sojourns through travel magazines.

Jordy nuzzled past her thick dark hair and salted her neck with a couple of small kisses. “Fresh weasel-squeezings, dear,” he whispered.

“Thanks, babe,” her voice smiled back. She closed her eyes and inhaled the aroma from the steam.

Plodding back to his kitchen perch, he sighed affectionately at the memory of their wedding day. Marriage to Jenna had been his greatest fulfillment. And, though the love he felt for their offspring was indescribable, he harbored just a touch of remorse over the unexpected early arrival of the first, only one year later. *Spock was right, truly the needs of the many, outweighed the needs of the few . . . or the one . . . whatever . . . his mind searched out a thread of logic . . . but, I have no regrets . . .*

All three of their children had become successful in their own professions, and for different reasons, each migrated to other countries: Ruth, the oldest, was married and worked as an archaeologist just outside of Cairo; their son, Archer, followed Jordy’s calling and was currently in London, working on his Ph.D; and their youngest, Susanna—having inherited Eddie’s genes—was off traveling the world as a captain in the U.S. Navy.

Jordy tapped the window, drawing a jay’s attention, and then watched as it flew off to dart and circle, along with four others, above the snow-laden pines—like mystical blue jewels in flight . . . *yet I truly miss the chase.* He breathed onto the window. His finger emitted short, clean squeaks as it traced through the fog, following the bird’s chaotic flight path.

Standing, and assuming the commanding posture of a skilled Shakespearean actor, he attempted to strike up a dialogue with a new jay that had landed on the sill. “What ho’, good Sir, remains to be unmasked that

has not already been? What say you, my sweet cerulean Sybil? From all the countless frontiers, can you place my feet on, but one of those likely paths?”

“Are you talking to me?” Jenna called from the bedroom.

“No, Hon, just babbling to myself again.”

The jay cocked its head sideways, staring at Jordy, and then bolted into the woods. At that point Cheech appeared, hopping hopelessly through the too-deep banks. Half-choked by the cold, his eyes cried volumes, as his frozen bark could not. Instantly aware of his oversight, Jordy gasped and ran for the door.

“Jordy, where’s Cheech?” Jenna piped.

“Uh . . .” When it came to that dog, Jordy was positive she could *smell* his neglect. “He’s taking a whiz dear!”

He raced to scoop up the frosty pup before he turned into an animal abuse statistic. He tried to show compassion. He knew what it was like to be on the receiving end of anger, but he just was not a dog-lover. Besides, Cheech was Jenna’s darling. He had limited interest in pets and wanted to name the dog something utilitarian, like *Damnit. Sit, Damnit! Don’t crap there, Damnit! Come here, Damnit!* But not Jenna, oh no, she had to choose some tongue-twister name of a South American king, or some such royalty.

Jordy rushed back inside, stomping the snow off his feet as he breathed circulation back into Cheech’s toes.

“Are there more cinnamon buns, Hon?” Jenna called.

“Yep, I’ll get one for you . . .” He held Cheech in the air, so they were nose to nose, and said in that famous high cackle, “And one for your little dog, too!”

Cheech yipped and kangarooed from Jordy’s arms, bulleting past his doggy-pillow into their bedroom, and springing onto the bed. Jenna yelped as he snuffled her armpit with his chilled nose.

“Jordan Hanford!” He heard her very clearly from the bedroom. “You forgot about him again, didn’t you?”

Jordy’s eyes widened, but he remained silent.

“Hon, you’re going to accrue some very bad karma if you keep turning him into a pup-sicle.”

He chuckled at the teasing reproach, and in his best Elvis voice he

whispered, “Techichi has entered the building . . . thank you very much!”

“What, Hon?”

“Oh, nothing!” He bowed to an absent audience then began buttering a bun. “I just feel like I’m about to have a grand emotional bowel movement,” he said under his breath.

“And that’s different than any other Saturday?” Jenna had materialized in the doorway. In his mind’s eye, he likened Jenna’s features to the most beautiful of Greek Goddesses: with her shiny, black hair and olive skin. And high above her gently-angled nose, her resolute brow sheltered a pair of eyes that spoke more emotions than the sea had faces. The only clue to her forty-odd years was a small set of crows-feet that couldn’t look more graceful if they’d been cut from the finest marble. And although, this morning, her hair was in a state that she always referred to as *a rat’s nest*, and the curve of her tall, slender figure—best suited to diaphanous lingerie—was hidden by a boyish nightshirt, to Jordy, her appeal was only enhanced.

He handed her the bun on a plate and gave her a cheesy grin.

Busted!

He grabbed his cup and quaffed the last dregs of his coffee. “It’s Saturday, and we’re socked in with all this, this . . .” He was swirling his arms around and trying to sound erudite, but, ended by saying, “This *chilly white stuff*. I’m just antsy, I guess.”

As he passed through the living room he turned the sound up on the TV to catch the latest in the presidential race. Images of the two main candidates and their wives were being splashed across the screen. Rook and Albright smiled and waved for the public. Jordy wondered why the two-party system had become so concrete in America. He had heard of the third candidate, but couldn’t remember his name. He only knew he was a business man who made his fortune by first-hand toil and sweat, and therefore stood to capture the hearts of the common man. He continued to channel-surf: a missing child, a sensationalized reality show of white-collar workers stranded in a desert, a gruesome middle-school slaying-suicide by some seriously misguided teen, *reality* this, *tabloid* that . . . what misery!

He briefly scanned his surroundings for inspiration from boredom, sighed and gave in to his one remaining sanctuary of insight: the bathroom library.

As he passed Jenna, they exchanged a quick squishy kiss and a brief, half-lidded eye-lock of love that always melted them both.

Jenna loved the dichotomy of her husband's personality: he could be completely pragmatic or anachronistically gallant—usually a strange mixture of both. As he plodded down the hall, she heard him say, “Ah, there's nothing as underrated or misunderstood as what goes on behind these doors.”

“Hmm, gallant? Not today.” She chuckled to herself.

Chapter 4

January 15

Jordy found himself in his MIT office early and invigorated. But by his afternoon coffee-break he was, once again, slogging through his usual routine of teaching five classes per day. He had always loved teaching—helping those young minds gradually peel back the layers of their ignorance and step into the light—but these last few weeks, he felt his enthusiasm waning. He chastised himself for this fruitless, emotional funk.

With a wave of relief, his last class of the day ended. Not ten minutes later, he was hurrying through the halls, down an icy sidewalk and into *The Miracle of Science Bar and Grille*—the local watering hole on Massachusetts Ave. As he crossed the threshold, he greeted his best friend, and intellectual equal, with a wide smile.

Tom Pierce was a fellow MIT professor of electro-dynamic engineering. He was a tall man with an athlete's body and a full head of wavy hair. He had been condemned to wearing glasses since junior high, but it certainly hadn't affected his charisma. He had remained the school beefcake, even into college. And every senior college girl cried that fateful day when he announced his marriage to Ginger.

Despite her name, Ginger did not have red hair, but rather luxurious, thick black tresses offset by a freckled but alabaster complexion. She was a natural beauty that needed no makeup. But her looks were not what had charmed him; he had fallen in love, sight-unseen, after hearing her interviewed on the college radio station.

She had won a biology award of some sort and relayed how a childhood thrill of watching tadpoles in puddles had inspired her interest in biology, and then she'd given a short dissertation on her studies. After hearing her fearless delivery, tinged with a self-effacing bashfulness, he was smitten.

They finally met through a friend of a friend of the radio DJ. On their first date she carried him off to Chicago for a *Magnetics Conference*—her thoughtfulness enchanted him. They took in the electro-magneto sessions by day and ate at avant-garde restaurants by night. Their lives and dreams spilled out before them with ease, and on their return to Boston, they remained inseparable. They had both been highly motivated and decided not to marry until each had graduated and established the cornerstone of their respective careers. To top it off, both their professional credentials were impeccable.

Tom was the current Dean of the Electro-Dynamic Engineering Department at MIT. He had climbed the EE ladder with ease—not only through the administration at MIT, but also consulting his way up through the rungs of TRW, Raytheon and General Dynamics as a concept designer. He absolutely loved designing things that didn't exist yesterday.

Ginger had gone on to attain a BS in biology—*summa cum laude*—and a Ph.D as a research bio-geneticist. She landed a job working in a stem cell research lab focusing on the rebuilding of cardiac tissue and repairing spinal cord injuries.

Now, they were known as DINKS: *Dual Income No Kids*. Ginger was unable to have children—their first attempt turned into a miscarriage with physiological complications ending in a full hysterectomy. To aid the emotional healing process, they threw themselves into sports and their careers. They jogged every morning—training for the annual Boston Marathon—and on the weekends they kayaked on the Charles River, hiked in the New Hampshire mountains or took to the streets of Boston with their roller blades. And for a cool-down, they'd shower, blend up a couple of fruit smoothies and

sit on their deck and brainstorm while gazing out to Minot's Ledge.

As Jordy made his way past the bar, he greeted Jake, the barkeep, and ordered a Guinness. As he neared the table, he called out to Tom, "Hey Brother, what's shakin'?"

They *were* like brothers.

Tom's response was to grin and frisbee a cardboard coaster towards the empty chair across from him; it stopped right at the edge of the table.

"How's the next generation of EE's looking?" Jordy gave him a friendly slap on the shoulder, and then plunked himself down into one of the faded, overstuffed chairs.

"More than I bargained for, Monsignor. Is it me, or are kids today growing up with degrees in their diapers?"

"Hmm, being outsmarted by a promising protégé?" Jordy asked.

"Yeah, one in particular, Leonard Langthorne, a Canadian whiz-kid working on a double Master's Degree in electrical and software engineering; but he thinks more like a Ph.D. As a researcher, he's relentless! And the questions . . ." Tom leaned back as if bowled over. "He's like some post-graduate gumshoe."

"Rejoice, Tom. *Crème de la crème.*"

"I know. He reminds me of our younger selves." Tom grinned like a devilish mad scientist.

Amused for the first time in days, Jordy was relaxed and laughing. While waiting for their drinks to arrive, they caught up on the other's weekend activities. During a comfortable lull in the conversation, Jordy unconsciously became preoccupied, carefully tapping the meniscus in his too-full water glass, while attentively watching it shiver.

Tom sat back, regarding him with interest. He watched his eyes glaze and squint with subtle tension. After twenty years of friendship, he had grown to love Jordy's eccentric personality. Jordy was a devout left-brain, as was Tom, with the ability to acutely focus on a problem and work it through on a number of levels. But in addition, he was a deep-thinking romantic with a subconscious inclination towards melodrama—a manifestation of a need for love and affection nurtured immeasurably by his adoring Jenna. Tom enjoyed indulging his moods, because they never reached a point of destruction—self

or otherwise. So he sat, patiently waiting, studying Jordy's deep gray eyes—priceless reflections of his profoundly emotional nature.

Their drinks arrived. They clinked glasses and quaffed past the foam.

The sun that had been streaming down from the horizontal windows above the bar now bathed Jordy in its rays, washing the strain from his face. He eyed Tom directly and finally blurted out, “Do you remember our salad days? When we had serious visions of actually *changing* the world?”

Tom relaxed back into his chair, welcoming the anticipated intellectual ramblings. “Regale me!”

“In my youth, I wanted to get involved in some obscure think tank, discover something completely novel, invent something really useful to mankind . . . or maybe investigate the fringes of science. But now, I find myself reflecting on my unfulfilled ambitions—”

“Ah . . . mental-pause!” Tom injected playfully. He reached forward and put a spin on a small bowl of pretzels that sat on the table.

Ignoring him, Jordy continued, “I don't want to give the wrong impression: it's not that I'm dissatisfied with the decisions I've made . . . exactly. I love my family, and I think I've made significant differences in the lives of my students. But I'd really like to have one last shot at grabbing that brass ring: travel uncharted seas, find the Holy Grail—”

“Unearth the Templar's secret!” Now, Tom was amused. “Hmm, maybe . . .” he added thoughtfully, “you mean *follow in the footsteps of your holy angel!*” He was fully aware of Uncle Eddie's positive influence on his friend.

“Maybe,” Jordy slowed down a bit, weighing the envy he had for his adventurous uncle with his own dreams. “Yes, maybe. Something unusual, something unique . . .”

“Dr. Frost, I'm afraid you have *the-road-less-traveled-was-at-the-last-exit* syndrome and have only a few weeks to live!” Tom said, winking.

Jordy was doing his best to ignore this mockery. “I don't need to go down in history like daVinci.” He stopped and reconsidered. “On second thought, why the hell not?”

Glee shone through the blue of Tom's eyes. Rarely would Jordy swear except around his closest inner circle of friends. He believed that profanity was a child of ignorance, the unenlightened, the Neanderthal; and never

wanted to be thought of as such by a stranger. This conviction originated as a rebellion to his father's character. He'd since forgiven George, but his position was, for the most part, resolute. So anytime Tom was a witness to Jordy's vulgarity, he felt an odd mixture of bonding, respect and juvenile delight. He also believed that in some weird way it was still a catharsis for his friend.

"Mozart, Einstein," Jordy continued, "Tesla, Fermi . . . for cripes sake, what did they have that I don't have?" He was now leaning forward with his hands raised like the Virgin Orans.

"Hmm, let's see. Oh! A notable theory and a Nobel Prize, perhaps?"

"That's it, Tom. You're out of the herd!"

They both chuckled.

Jordy then proceeded to beat the dead horse. "At this point, I'd even accept equal status to Marilyn Monroe. Famous or infamous— I'm not picky."

Tom listened, patiently.

"Well, as long as my legacy doesn't produce felonious fruit," he added as a disclaimer. "But the thought of future exploits either taunts me like a shadow on my mind's periphery, or it simply evaporates . . ."

He'd worked himself into such a mental frenzy that small beads of sweat had formed on his temples. He made one last attempt to sputter out a few more words, but resigned himself to declare: "End of story!" He fell back into the tangible comfort of his cushy chair.

Tom took his cue and filled the void. "Interesting predicament, Doc." He rarely referred to people by name; pet-names were much more fun. "My *little hopeful* had me jumping through hoops all day, today. And I found myself dogging my way around his questions because, well, frankly, I didn't really have an answer."

Jordy at him blankly.

"He began by stating the first law of physics—you remember," Tom continued, "energy can't be created nor destroyed, only transformed—then he posed the question *where does the energy in the circuit 'originate'?* Then, '*if it comes from the power source where does the power source get it?*' And then he hits me with—"

Puzzled, Jordy screwed up his face and huffed, "And this is related to my road-less-traveled quandary *how?*"

“Patience, Bud.” Tom took a drink and continued, “So, then he says, if opposing waves of energy cancel each other out, where does the energy go if it can’t be destroyed? What is it transformed into?” Tom leaned forward and wagged his finger in Jordy’s face. “You may not realize it, but those are cutting-edge questions in the world of EE. Heavy!”

Jordy quaffed his beer and looked bored, but Tom pressed on, “The last time they crossed my mind I was an inquisitive freshman in Gallagher’s class, Electrical Theory 101. Ah, good ole Gallagher—”

“Okay, I’ll bite! Your answer was?”

“Just what ole Gallagher had imparted.” Tom exaggerated good posture and assumed his old professor’s lackluster tone, “In this class we are concerned only with what happens *within* the circuit, not anything *outside of* the circuit. If you’re looking for *truth*—his voice raised an octave—perhaps you should move across campus to the drafty halls of Philosophy or Religion 101!”

“Oh, that was deep. So much for *the road-less-traveled*.”

“*Touché*, Monsignor. *Touché*.”

Despite his initial state of mind, Jordy found himself genuinely intrigued. “So, if *you* had to answer the questions,” Jordy began, “where does energy come from, and where does an electron get all its energy to endlessly orbit its nucleus? And what is electrical energy, exactly?” He was flailing his arms around for dramatic effect. “What say you?”

“*Santa Maria, bless me with endurance!* You sound exactly like my little Mr. Langthorne. *Energy coming, energy going, perpetual orbits . . .* maybe Dr. Schrödinger in the Physics Department can field those questions. But what exactly *is* electrical energy? Now, *that*, I can answer! It’s like this . . .” He quaffed his beer, leaned forward on his elbows, touched his closed knuckles together and faced his thumbs in opposite directions. Then he explained, “Electrical energy is technically a difference in charges—a polarity separation, or a dipole. Meaning that, one group of atoms, that is missing some of its electron, and another group of atoms, with an abundance of electrons, are separated by an insulator.”

Jordy was still puzzled, “How does *that* make electricity?”

“When a conductor is placed between these two groups, electrons are pulled from one atom to the next through the conductor. When electrons

flow through a conductor, a magnetic field is produced on the outside of the conductor.”

“So, that’s *energy*?” Jordy wasn’t entirely impressed.

“Well, here’s the catch,” Tom began to explain. “There’s currently no singular definition for energy or radiation, only forces as vectors and *the ability to do work*.”

“Hmm.” Jordy spent a moment pondering this new information. “What creates and sustains the dipole?”

“Our current electrical model describes static charges, chemical charges, and dissimilar metallic charges as creating a dipole; or any number of possible elements that have an abundance or absence of electrons.” As he spoke, Tom had begun to suck the large salt crystals off a pretzel. “This model has been used for the past one hundred years or so, and has served us well.”

“Then how could Tesla, and many others like him, claim and demonstrate that energy is in great abundance everywhere and is easily available in any quantity?”

Tom shrugged. “It’s a mystery.”

“With all of our new fangled high-tech gadgetry and a hundred years of homework, shouldn’t we be able to at least do the same, if not better? What did they know that we don’t?”

Again, Tom shrugged. “As I recall, it was James Clerk Maxwell—a Scottish, theoretical physicist—in 1860 or so, who first modeled an electromagnetic theory. But his work was all in quaternion math, and very few people in the world at that time understood it. It’s possible that Tesla used Maxwell’s model, if he knew the math; the paper *was* available and he *was* a very bright fellow.”

Jordy laughed.

“As a matter-of-fact,” Tom continued, “Maxwell was pressed to simplify the quaternion equations to something more understandable, but he died in the process. Oliver Heaviside and others translated his work into vector math so the rest of us could understand and use his theory, at least in circuits. That’s the model we work with today.”

“Quaternion to vector?” Jordy shook his head. “Impossible.”

Tom was now cracking and chewing on peanuts.

“Hmm . . .” Jordy tapped his forehead with his index finger. “I wonder . . . how would one get a hold of Maxwell’s *original* work, not the Heavyside translation, but the original manuscript?”

“I’m not sure. Why do you ask?”

“Because,” Jordy said, “it’s simply not *possible* to accurately translate quaternion math to vector. It’s like translating Hebrew to English; meanings are always lost in the translation.”

Tom’s interest was piqued. “I could make some inquiries with Fergy, that colleague of mine who moved back to Edinburgh after getting his Masters.”

“Yes, do it.” The glaze of self-pity had dissolved from Jordy’s eyes, and they shone with inspiration.

“I smell adventure!” Tom said, throwing a peanut in the air and catching it in his mouth.

“The quest is upon us!” Jordy was now sporting a wide grin.

“Aar, Capt’n! Do ye see it?” Tom pointed past the bottles of grog behind the bar. “The white whale is just over the horizon! You handle the math, I’ll handle the circuits, and we’ll shanghai a swabby to hoist the sails!”

They raised their glasses.

“To the hunt! That snow white whale will be ours!”

“Before you can say *Call me Ishmael*, Aar!”

“Aar!”

Chapter 5

February 1

Jordy was busy in the kitchen making Jenna’s favorite dinner—Eddie’s Baked Mac’n’Cheese. As he slid it into the oven, his cell rang from beneath his snug apron. In a frantic attempt to retrieve it, he burned his hand on the

top element of the oven. “Damn it!”

Cheech was nearby and he flinched.

“Not you,” he said reassuringly. But Cheech had dashed into the bedroom.

He hit the talk button. “Hello?”

“Hey Bud, it’s me. I hit pay dirt! Not only is Fergy sending me an electronic copy of Maxwell’s original manuscript, but scads of lab notes as well. I’m pressing the *Send* key right now.”

“Outstanding. I’m on it.”

“Later, Bud!”

Instantly energized, Jordy tore off his apron and ran for his office, stubbing his toe squarely on the doorjamb as he rounded the corner. Oblivious to any pain, he hopped the last ten feet and dropped himself into his chair. He downloaded Tom’s files from his email and began perusing the manuscript.

Being very familiar with quaternion math, he poured through the pages of equations like they were the *Sunday Funnies*. Halfway through, however, his enthusiasm sobered and his brow knitted.

He *Googled* the Heaviside/Lorentz translation of the same work and then the Whitaker papers of 1903, which led him to Paul Dirac’s theories. His math-savvy mind quickly determined that he was staring at a completely novel approach to physics by combining these theories.

For hours he mentally compared the results of their work. Jenna floated in and out of his office: first with a plate of hummus and toast-points, then with a cold Guinness, and then hours later to kiss him goodnight. As she left, she turned out the harsh overhead light, leaving him in the golden glow of his desk lamps. She also noticed that his hummus was undipped and his glass was full of flat beer.

“I was so blind!” Hours had passed, and Jordy had finally raised his head from his work. In his usual, melodramatic fashion, he raised his hands towards the ceiling fan in mock adoration. “Heaviside, Hertz, Lorentz!” He named each blade as it circled above him. “You have delivered me from ineptitude.”

He allowed his lids to slide closed. Applause echoed around him as he reached out to shake hands with the ghost of Alfred Nobel, and in the final moments before his acceptance speech, he bowed from the waist to his three

new champions. “I thank you . . .” He continued to wax on, vaingloriously, in his fantasy.

“Ugh!” Mid-conceit, an epiphany peeled his eyelids back and forced the pompous smile from his face. “What a bore!” He scolded his bloated ego out loud for allowing self-indulgence to monopolize his self-worth. “And how insufferable I must be to my sweet Jenna.” He promised himself he’d apologize to her in the morning. But presently, he was on a mission, and spent the next three hours integrating the equations of Maxwell, Whitaker, and Dirac into a new math model.

“And now for the master’s touch,” he whispered as he began to integrate Einstein’s theories of general and special relativity with quantum physics models, and then synthesize them with his newest swollen list of equations. He saved his document and leaned back exhausted.

But he couldn’t stop there. He now had to synthesize the components.

As his brain worked on creating his new formula, he sought a distraction. As usual, the virtual fish gliding across Jenna’s monitor became his hypnotic escape. As the fish navigated through the digital algae, his thoughts wended their way into the innermost sanctum of his subconscious—probing, analyzing and surmising.

Then, casting his thoughts like a net, he wholly extended his mind, injecting all his natural genius into the heart of the equations, attempting to glimpse an insight into where the equations were leading.

Then, *whoosh!* A warm rush of melatonin began to flood his system.

Neither asleep nor awake, he found himself staring into a large set of dark, almond-shaped eyes peering out from Jenna’s screen. Curious, he stared back. Variables and numbers began to appear and eventually obscure the watchful eyes—twirling and colliding until a host of equations was revealed in resplendent glory. His hand reached out to the math—this was it—white light beamed between his fingers—he could see it. He’d figured it out!

Cheech yelped. Jordy clutched his heart as he was jerked from his trance.

“Shush, Damn it!” he snapped.

The dog had been lying at his feet, but was now erect. Baring his teeth, he sat shivering and growling at the monitor.

Jordy shook off his daze and looked down at his quivering guard. He

softened, and leaned over to pat his head. “What’s up, boy?”

Cheech whined, still looking at the computer screen.

Jordy looked back at the monitor: no eyes—what had he expected?

But he had it! The equations were as clear in his mind as shards of ebony inlaid into crystal.

By this time, Jenna’s fish had nearly filled the tank. Between the Speckled Leaf fish and Crimson Comets popping out babies, Jordy decided that Lenny—Tom’s new protégé—needed to be part of their team. His programming expertise would be a perfect tool in revealing more of what the *Maxwell-Whitaker-Dirac-Einstein* work was expressing.

With eyes blurred, and stomach growling, he sent Tom an email, asking him to forward it to Lenny; it simply stated:

Mr. Langthorne,

Please see me first thing Monday morning for a position
in Research and Development.

Thank you.

Dr. J. Hanford

He stood up and winced from a cramped back and a nasty throb in his toe. Escorted by Cheech, he limped to his sweet snoozing wife and finally caught a ride on his mental drift downstream—a physical reward for his tenacity.



The next morning over breakfast, ragged but full of fervor, Jordy begged Jenna’s forgiveness.

“I hated to say it, but you *were* intellectually comatose for the last couple of weeks . . . and a bit of a bear to live with!”

“I know; I’m sorry. Forgive me?” He batted his eyelashes at her. They both laughed.

“Of course. Thanks, baby,” she said, then kissed him.

“I love you, babe.”

They had always enjoyed verbally nuzzling each other.

Then, with a great deal of animation, he revealed his findings. Sharing in his exhilaration, she listened to him wax on about possible devices, patents and changing the world to a true, green technology.

Jenna was a gifted abstract-thinker, and over the years, she'd accrued a wide grasp of her husband's technical specialization. It was only when he dove into new or esoteric language, beyond her ability to conceptualize, that she'd call a time-out for a layman-terms summary. They were perfect complements for the other when brainstorming and spent some time batting ideas back and forth and fleshing out the best options.

Finally, relaxed. "Jenna, I can't believe this is happening to *me!* It's as if this whole thing just dropped into my lap."

"Out of the sky!"

"Down from the stars!"

"Well it certainly fell on the most deserving person." She was thrilled about his new adventure. Plus, she hadn't seen him this excited in years. "And it's about time, Mister!" she said, laughing—relieved and in love.

"Do you realize this might mean a Nobel Prize?" He couldn't help mentioning it.

"You and that Nobel Prize . . . do you realize that you are late for work?"

Just before he ran out the door, she handed him a toasted bagel loaded with cream cheese and jelly, left-over mac'n'cheese and two cinnamon buns stuffed into a brown paper sack.

Then in one smooth motion, he embraced her. She leaned back—like a flyer in a tango—he kissed her on the neck, and then, with face beaming, he sped out the door.



By five o'clock that afternoon, Tom and Lenny were waiting on Jordy at the watering hole. The bar was packed, and when he entered, Tom had to stand and wave to get his attention. "Monsignor, over here!"

Jordy nodded a *hello the usual*, to Jake, and snaked his way to the table. Tom made the introductions, and when he shook Lenny's hand, Jordy

instantly sized-up the boy as a life-enthusiast.

The three of them chatted, and they learned that Lenny and his common-law wife, Roxanne, had been an *item* for five years. They also had a son, Jason, who was now two. Roxanne had her undergraduate in geology, but had realized that merely studying inert matter held no attraction. Instead, she segued into the arts and became a sculptor where she had the opportunity to impart life to static matter.

For the entire last year, Lenny said he'd been contemplating proposing formal marriage to her but wanted to be able to afford a diamond ring before popping the question. Being a student—and notoriously poor—he was hoping the ring would make up in sentiment for their years of poverty.

“Forget the jewels, Christopher Columbus! If she really loves you, she'll marry you for that inordinately large brain of yours and that winning smile.” Tom drew a happy face in the condensation on the side of Lenny's water glass.

“One would hope. She's my muse, you know,” Lenny said. His eyes were dreamy. Jordy admired his unabashed honesty.

While waiting, Tom had been cracking peanuts from their shells and corraling them into a pile. “Grab one!” he offered Jordy.

“No thanks.”

Tom started to munch into his legumes.

“Where are your drinks?” Jordy asked as the waitress appeared with his Guinness.

“We made the mistake of waiting to be served,” Tom laughed.

“Well, boys. Drinks are on me!” Jordy laid a twenty on the table and wasted no time in wetting his whistle.

The waitress looked to Lenny.

“Whatever the big dogs are drinking is fine with me.” He tipped the waitress with his extraordinarily white smile.

She returned it with a wink and made him blush. Tom ordered a lager for each, and she disappeared into the crowd.

“By the way, Lenny, what's the focus of your thesis?”

“Well, Dr. Hanford, it's based on the intrinsic value of computational dynamic modality of interconnected systems operating as a cohesive entity.

At least that's my starting point . . . I may flesh it out a bit."

Jordy went silent and gave him a blank stare. Close to ten seconds went by without a word.

Mildly intimidated, Lenny started to flush and his eyes darted to Tom for support.

"Sounds like a real jaw-dropper," Jordy finally clucked.

"He likes you!" Tom patted Lenny firmly on the back.

"Yeah, I'll let you know when the sequel comes out," Lenny said self-effacingly.

Guffaws rose and fell, and then Jordy got down to business. "Boys, we have one heck of a project to develop."

Jordy was antsy and Tom was curious.

"Fill us in," Tom said, including Lenny with a wave of his hand.

Jordy chanted, "I smell a No-bel, I smell—"

"Of course you do." Tom faked a yawn.

"First, I need to know who wants *in*, and what sort of commitment you two can give me, in terms of time per week. Tom?"

"Whatever it takes *Oh Great One!*"

"Lenny?"

The youth was now the one wearing the blank stare. He hadn't been briefed on *anything* and felt dreadfully out of his league.

"No disrespect, but this is a bit sudden." He struggled to find the right words. "I feel I'm at a major disadvantage, knowing nothing about your project—not to mention the time I'll need to continue my thesis."

"Of course!" Jordy apologized. "I'm getting ahead of myself."

The waitress delivered their drinks, and after she left, Jordy explained: "It appears that Heaviside and Lorenz missed the mark enough for us to gain some serious professional stature. There are countless patents to be had right from the *giddy-up*. What has become evident is a hole in the middle of the current electro-dynamic (ED) theory that completely dismisses a working system far from equilibrium."

"Hold on! What are you saying . . . our current ED model is incorrect?" Skepticism was evident on Tom's face as well as in his voice.

"No, not *exactly*; but there is a small, albeit very *important*, piece missing.

And it's been missing for over a century. Our current ED model assumes that it can only work within the stated terms of thermodynamics: laws that *only* describe a system in equilibrium. Maxwell laid out the math in quaternion because that was the language that can best describe *knowns* and *unknowns*—the vectors and scalars.”

Tom was silent and thoughtful.

“So, Tom, if this *is* true, how would an ED model—operating far from equilibrium—function?” Jordy challenged him.

Mentally noodling through these new ideas, Tom responded as his hypothesis gelled, “Obviously, it would act in a fashion not like what we are used to . . . perhaps, not needing to be plugged in . . . or providing much more power for its size . . . say, something the size of a nine volt battery could provide enough power to run a toaster, while consuming virtually nothing.”

“Precisely!” Jordy’s spirit was on fire. “However, I believe you’re still thinking too small. According to Maxwell’s theory, something the size of a toaster could, in effect, power a small city. Indefinitely!”

Tom displayed his uncertainty by sucking air through his teeth, but Lenny was beginning to nod.

“Hear me out,” Jordy continued. “This is because the device doesn’t create the power in and of itself, but couples to a power source outside itself. Therefore it is ‘*not in equilibrium with itself*, but ‘*far from equilibrium from outside of itself*.”

The daring side of Tom began warming up to the idea.

“So, Mr. Langthorne, does that clarify our intentions?” Jordy was hopeful.

Lenny’s apprehension had dissipated and he was more than intrigued. Knowing a little about the discovery process and the slim opportunities for such an undertaking, he was willing to take the chance to rocket his career forward.

“Well, I have to admit, I’m thrilled to have been hand-picked for this project! However,” he said, clearing his throat. “My thesis will still need attention . . . and . . .”

Jordy was nodding.

“And, so, as long as I’m . . . compensated . . .” Lenny trailed off, feeling slightly embarrassed.

Ah, money! Jordy thought. He gave him credit for bringing it up, particularly because he seemed so uneasy about it. And having just learned of Lenny's family responsibilities, Jordy regarded him with respect. "Certainly, Mr. Langthorne, we have a hefty portion of a long-standing research grant at our disposal."

Ah, relief! Lenny sighed, encouraged. The idea of having incoming funds simplified his choice, but it was his implicit trust of Dr. Pierce that sealed his decision. "Well then, count me in! And call me *Lenny*."

"*Lenny*, it is. Welcome aboard!" Jordy shook his hand.

"Ditto!" Tom threw him a peanut.

"Well, son, I'll need you to write a program based on the equations on this drive," Jordy said, offering Lenny a gig-stick.

Lenny reached for it, and pulled at it, but Jordy wouldn't give up the jump-drive. Instead, he began dictating requirements. So after two failed tugs, Lenny defaulted to his analog backup: a short yellow pencil that he pulled from behind his ear, and a dog-eared note pad, which he kept in his back pocket like a wallet.

Jordy was staring directly at Lenny as he spoke. "On the first pass, run through the permutations of each equation and reorder them more efficiently. Only if needed.

On the second pass, execute the final resolved equations. When infinite loops are encountered, I need as much cycle-time as is practical to be able to graph where that loop is leading.

Then, print the final equations in their entirety. This should tell us more of what we need to know.

Here are the instructions." Jordy had finally placed the stick on the table in front of Lenny. "The links to databases, the main equation loop and my contact information are also on there. If you have any problems, call me!"

Lenny nodded, jamming the stick into an inside pocket in his backpack.

"Now, Lenny," Jordy implored, "this is important. You *must* use your own resourcefulness and encrypt the program and data so that peering eyes won't have much to go on. This encryption method is critical, and at this point it is our *only* safeguard."

"I'll make it rival Kryptos," Lenny promised.

“Fantastic! And Tom, I’ll need you to come up with a circuit that demonstrates what the equations are expressing.”

“Sure, but I’m not up on my quaternion math so you’ll have to guide me through the initial translation until I get the hang of it.” Then motioning to Lenny, he said, “You may have to do double duty and assist me on this, too.”

Lenny entered more notes, nodding; he was beginning to feel a great weight of responsibility.

Amused, Tom had been watching him scribble the whole time, and finally asked, “I’m curious, Mr. Langthorne . . . have you ever heard of PDAs?”

“Yes, Professor, and about two months ago mine experienced a unique type of *cellular* mitosis when I dropped it on the tracks of *The T*, and I haven’t had time to replace it.”

The two professors guffawed at his deadpan delivery. Then Jordy swiftly brought the focus back to the experiment. He was infected with excitement. “You both have my complete support at every turn. I probably don’t need to remind you that this project must be kept absolutely secret—”

“Absolutely secret!” Tom echoed.

“And under *no* circumstances can any information about this project be released to *any* person outside of us three. Understood?”

“Under no circumstances!” Tom chanted.

“Not any other person!” Lenny grinned.

Jordy laughed at himself and raised his glass ceremoniously. “Gentlemen, we are all going to be rich *and* famous.”

“And hopefully within our lifetime!” Tom added.

“The sooner the better!” Lenny chimed.

“Oh! That reminds me. Time.” Jordy checked his watch, “I need to apply for mainframe time in the morning. Gotta run boys!”

“Thank you, Sir; I’m really looking forward to . . .” Jordy had disappeared into the crowd leaving Lenny in mid-sentence.

“And away he flew like the down of a thistle,” Tom chirped as he slapped Lenny on the back. “Drink up! It seems you have a big day tomorrow.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Don’t call me Sir.”

Acknowledgments

In order to present *The Four Orders of Inherent Freedom* as a series of novels, we needed to stand on the shoulders of giants and offer a glimpse of what could be our shared alternate reality. The appendix of this book includes a number of the aforementioned giants. Some sacrificed their lives, their families' lives, or their reputations in the scientific communities; and, some sacrificed their sanity, in order to improve the human condition, by publishing their work.

We are eternally in debt to their selfless devotion in their area of expertise. These books are meant as a tribute to these men and women, so that future generations may come to know the importance of their contributions and how they influence our daily lives.

I also need to acknowledge those people in my life who have affected me in ways of which they were not aware, but by crossing their wake they have caused my life to turn in a particular direction that neither they nor I intended. As a result I see this as God working in my life. If I have affected others in the same way, I can only account it all as good.

To my wife, Terre: If it weren't for your encouragement I never would have written about all the *stuff* I have been careful to fill my head with over many decades. It was you who said I *could* when I thought I couldn't, and by being patient and loving, we both gave birth to four novels. I cannot, and will not, imagine heaven without you.

Most people, if not all, have an *Uncle Eddie*; and to my own Uncle Eddie: I wish people in your life had treated you the way you treated me. Your personal problems, although crippling, never seemed to interfere with your heart's intent. You taught me how to cook, how to be patient, how to be funny, how to succeed when I thought I couldn't, when to let go, when to hold on, how to live in the moment, and how to enjoy life when things couldn't have been worse. I am who I am today, largely, because of you. I can't wait until we meet again.

To those who know me: Perhaps you are unaware, because I may not have told you directly, that you have impacted my life, as surely as a meteorite leaves its mark on the earth.

I remember everyone, from my classmates in the first grade to the Salvation Army volunteer I met yesterday, and each of you has influenced the characters' personalities in these books.

What do we know for sure? Only that which we experience for ourselves.

Daniel Ward



God is responsible for what talents I might possess, and for this I am thankful.

I am ever-grateful to my parents, for always encouraging me to dream, create, and search out my own destiny; and many thanks to all my mentors—both personal and professional—who encouraged and inspired me on the journey of shaping my constitution. Fortunately, my life experiences have allowed me certain insights to help carve out these characters and their adventures; we both hope you enjoy meeting them as much as we enjoyed molding them.

And to my husband, Daniel: Without you, this book could have never been written. You are a well-spring of scientific knowledge, rich with inventive thought, and blessed with an inexhaustible creative spirit. This adventure has been unmatched! My gratitude and love for you are both immeasurable.

Terre Britton

“Yes, Boss.”

“Don’t call me Boss!”

“Yes, Sir.” Lenny laughed and drained his glass.

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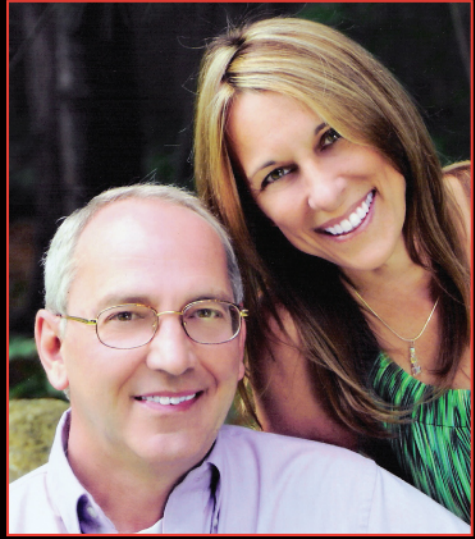
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