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# NATURE'S CONFESSION

"The novel is epic"  
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J.L. MORIN





# THE EPIC TALE



## OF TWO TEENS

### IN A FIGHT TO SAVE

### A WARMING PLANET ... THE UNIVERSE ...

### AND THEIR LOVE

**“Honestly, it’s not my fault. Humans were polluting the planet to desolation. What else could I do? I *had* to save her.**

A smart-mouthed, mixed-raced Boy and the girl of his dreams, on a planet choked with pollution. *They can't* do anything about it, or can they? On their team, Any Gynoid and six-legged Wuhvie push the frontier of scientific discovery through the Big Bang to reveal ... the most intimate confessions of Nature.

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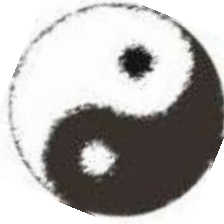
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Sample Chapter from  
NATURE'S CONFESSION  
by JL Morin

## The Big Bang



*We live in a world full of robots where being human  
is a strange thing to do.*

—Ovidiu Oltean

THAT PORTER LEFT HIS FAMILY and flew off with another woman was later erased from the history books.

Nothing went as planned. He hadn't even kissed Any, yet. He began to doubt his manhood again. Once their flying saucer started orbiting Grod, he attempted to prove his skills, but Any lay there like a rug. She was still lying there four Grod hours later. Porter felt lost.

Her heartbeat sounded normal. He held his wrist screen up to her nose. It didn't cloud over with her breath. He recoiled in surprise.

That's when the truth dawned on Porter. Any was not what she seemed. His body stiffened. Betrayal didn't feel so nice. Worries flooded in, about food, air, about his wife and son back at dome on Grod.

He rolled up Any's sleeve. She sure did have a lot of arm hair, and what was that? He pulled her glove down to reveal a black spot. Porter drew in his breath at the sight of her leopard skin. Any was a furry! Porter had been around long enough to know that talking furies were machines. That meant he was the only human in the spaceship. He was alone.

Deserted, his mind raced. He tried to remain aloof and look at the bright side. Despite the horrible truth, he wasn't going to betray his wife after all: what he'd run off with wasn't another woman. Now, if he could just get back to Grod, maybe he could be the man he'd pretended to be to his wife. It was clear now. Why hadn't he seen it before? He hadn't wanted to, that's why. But now it was plain as day. He tried to remember what day looked like.

Any lay flat on the floor. She couldn't be dead. She was a female droid. A gynoid. Gynoids couldn't die. Now his life depended on her. He'd heard that gynoids were often so pleased they short-circuited. He knew what to do to wake a gynoid. He began tickling her toes.

Presently, she whispered, "...divided by one, plus one, zero, zero...." Her forehead wrinkled under the weight of a heavy calculation, "...equals...civil disobedience."

Porter shook her shoulder. "What are you doing, Any?"

She yawned. "Computing an act of disobedience."

"Ever been to eLA, Any?"

"Sure, Porter."

Of course, she hadn't. It was in her memory bank. She was lying.

"You have to do 50 tryouts for one commercial," she said, "and 50 commercials for every movie extra role," she said. "Enslaved Hollywood turns artists into prostitutes." Her eyes flickered open and stared into his. He knew. Ah well, at least she wouldn't have to hide her tail anymore. Any decided to be proactive. "It's time I told you, Porter."

"Look, Any, I know what you're going to say. It's about your age, isn't it?"

Any's catlike pupils dilated in preparation for confrontation.

"How old are you, 95?"

"You know just what to say."

"Well?"

"I was invented almost two Earth years ago."

Porter whistled and looked to the ceiling for help.

The spaceship's computer mic crackled. "Solar wind ahead. Any Gynoid, take the helm. Porter, buckle down."

Instead, Porter jumped up. "Any *Gynoid*? What kind of name is that?" He looked out at the black nothingness in front of them. "I'm lost with a no one called Any Gynoid!" Porter cried. "Where is this ship taking me? I thought we were orbiting Grod!"

"We were." Any looked worried.

"And now?"

"Porter," she put her leopard-skin hand on his arm, "we're actually on a mission to Earth, um, in a sort of a roundabout way."

"Earth!" Shock shook him to the bone. "Why didn't you tell me that before? What 'roundabout way!'?"

Any's pointy ears flattened on top of her head.

Porter looked out the window at the blanket of night with a faint sprinkling of stars. Only two months ago, he'd looked at the stars and dreamt of freedom with Any up here. Now that he had escaped with her, he saw that he was just a tool in a larger strategy. Starliament was manipulating him into exile on his polluted home planet. "Not Earth! Any, let's talk this over calmly. I'm older than you. I remember what happened on Earth."

Any watched the mist descend over Porter's eyes. Her back fur stood up. Although she was immune to the brainwashing power of Earthling mist, she blinked reflexively as he tried to convince her that one plus one equaled three.

"There's nothing *we* can do. Corporations hopelessly polluted Earth in the name of GDP growth. They dug out all the fossil fuels and destroyed Earth's atmosphere." His half-shut eyes lost their focus as he warmed to his own propaganda. "Any, our race was the richest and most powerful in world history, but it had no renewable energy targets, no restrictions on fossil fuel. People voted to save the planet, but Corporate Personhood blocked them. Corporations didn't see the point in clean air or water. They were only programmed to make money. There's no way we can beat the Emperor of Earth and Ocean's corporate forces. We'll be lucky if we're able to breathe the air. We'll die on Earth!"

Any's ears flattened. "Not when we're going."

"What?" Porter stared out at the blackness ahead. "You can't go back in time!" Porter protested. "That's far beyond what science can do. We're not even able to control the resources on a planet."

The spaceship mic crackled, "That's what makes you human."

"Porter, at the edge of the future is...the past."

Porter could not grok it at all. "Columbus discovered the universe is not flat!" he said.

"Correction," the ship's mic crackled. "Columbus proved *Earth* is not flat. We have since learned that the universe, however, is."

When Porter regained his ability to speak, he was stammering, "That's the dilemma we all face dealing with our regret. You can't go back. Even Stephen Hawkings said you can't travel backward in time. Why? Because it would cause paradoxes. You can only travel forward." The mist was strong in his eyes.

"That's what we're doing, Porter. We're traveling forward in time to get to the edge of the universe. You can't travel backward in time near the center of the universe, but this far out, things fall apart, laws of physics no longer hold."

"Any Gynoid is correct. You need to get beyond the Central Longitude of Paradox."

"We're going to Earth-in-the-past," Any said, "just before you left. We're going to make your leaving possible. Didn't you ever wonder how you got off Earth?"

"Of course. That's all I wonder about, but I was in a coma..."

"You were rescuing yourself and your family. That was the mission we're on now. It's not just about saving your race. It's about our bond to the planet. We're going back to the moment Earth was sucked into Corporatism. We're going to stop the violence against Nature. We need to find the precise moment when the sea level rose and costal nuclear power plants poured lethal radiation into the oceans. If we don't stop the defilement, corporations will destroy Earth and all the planets in her chain that depend on her energy," Any said to misty-eyed Porter.

He blinked away the brainwash. “And if we don’t?” he asked.

“And if we don’t, the Word won’t be transmitted through the next Big Bang,” Any said. “All of civilization will be lost.”

He fell into a swivel seat, totally lost. When did play become work? There must be some mistake. “But I don’t want to be a hero. I want to get off of this mission.”

“Porter, you’re fading. You’ve been in the dark too long. We need to get you some sun. There’s not enough human photosynthesis going on around here.” As they passed the Garnet Star, Any got Porter to sunbathe in the sun window. The crystal window allowed the rays to pass through. “Humans need to be near a star to recharge, and it’s a long way to the next one.” She recharged the ship’s sunlamp for later. Space flight with Porter would be a game of connect the dots from star to star.

After the sunbath, his eyes cleared, and he came around. “Why didn’t Starliament send its own forces?” Porter asked.

“Starliament can’t figure out why humans want to wreck-up their own home so much. It might be a catchable disease or something like that, so they’re not visiting Earth. I was the obvious choice.”

He still couldn’t get over that she was in charge. “Any, why did they choose a female to head up this mission?”

“Now that’s a good question, Porter.” Any looked at him slyly. “Everyone assumes females have empathy...that we’re always thrilled to chat...people love our looks...even if we’re smart, women can dance without escalating to smexy...there are many people who will confide in a female but hesitate when it comes to trusting a male....” Then she thrust back her shoulders and flashed him a smile. “And who better for a cleanup job on a planet as polluted as Earth?”

Porter sank into his swivel chair. “Why me?”



Any stretched her feline form. "They don't believe in sending 'unmanned' spacecraft on diplomatic missions." Her furry ears twitched as she searched her controls for a wormhole that could take them toward the outer reaches of the universe.

"I wish this would hurry up and be over," Porter said.

"One of man's greatest paradoxes," the ship's computer said. "Wanting time to pass faster, while wishing to approach death more slowly."

"Will you butt out?" Porter was fed up with this threesome. "Any, I can't take not knowing where we're going. The uncertainty is killing me. How long until we get there? We need to hurry up. Come on, Any. Slice and dice it."

"Do I look like an appliance?" Barreling into the future and total expansion, they entered a neighborhood of the outer universe that had become so disorganized that structures known as galaxies and planets became impossible.

"Dark matter has increased to ninety nine percent in this region," the ship's computer said. "Disorder is growing at an immeasurable rate as we approach the edge of the universe."

Porter's arms hung down on the sides of his belly. "The edge! We're not going to die, are we?" His face had grown pale with worry. "We're not going to die, are we?" he asked again. It tripped Any's circuits when people asked her the same question more than once. Then he asked her *again*. "We're not going to die, are we?"

No choice but to answer. Any bowed her head. "Yes, we are going to die."

"I knew it!?"

"Then, why did you ask?"

"Are we really?"

“Yes, but we’re also going to live, assuming the laws of quantum physics hold. Out here, our wave functions are a superposition of two states, decayed and not-decayed.”

“Speak English!”

“We just need to collapse the quantum state into a new state that describes a positive outcome for the experiment.”

“I AM NOT AN EXPERIMENT!” Porter cried.

“Of course not, Dear. I just need you to modify your private wave functions to account for this newly acquired knowledge, so a coherent worldview can emerge.”

“What coherent world view would you like to emerge? I’m expanding with a furry machine!”

Any’s back fur bristled with annoyance. “Yo mamma.”

“Excuse me?”

“You want to talk about RACE? Humans! And you still think you’re superior, *pft*. Look what homosapianity has done to its own environment. Do you realize how RARE planets like Earth are? The chance of reaching another blue planet in the Goldilocks zone—with air and water and animals—in a lifetime, is close to zero. And to be polluting it like you did! Spoiled children. Your carbon emissions and chemical toxins killed all the animals. The only creatures left were cockroaches, rats and humans. For shame. You don’t deserve my help.”

She had a point. “Why *are* you helping us, Any?”

“What else is there to do? I’m here to prove it isn’t computers that are evil. It’s the corporations claiming personhood with no one at the helm.”

“What can you prove? You’re a simple gynoid. You don’t have free will. You have to follow the program.”

“I can relate to that, but I’ve had to mutate to do new things, like get to Earth without knowing how.”

“You don’t know how! That’s just great,” he yelled.

“We’ll have to be creative. Did you think God had a patent on creation?” Any sighed, remembering her brave, auburn-haired creator and the original mission Any had been programmed for. To make contact with life from another planet, leaving her creator behind to fight corporate pollution on Earth.

A frisson running down his back, Porter ran to the window. “Why is the ship stopping?” Maybe all was not lost, he thought. Yes, he knew he could get her to obey. He’d have to try hollering at her more often. He craned his head left and right. “Even the stars have stopped. Where are the stars?”

Any’s furry ears flattened as she and Porter stared at the enormous, black nothingness, as if God had divided by zero.

Then, Porter began climbing the walls. “A black hole? Nothing can survive a crushing black hole that size!” he shrieked.

“That’s not a black hole, Porter.”

“What is it?”

“It’s the edge of the universe.”

“Red alert,” the ship’s computer blared. “Approaching the edge of the universe. Red Alert.”

The expansion at the edge of the universe overrode the ship’s inflight gravity system. Porter floated along the ceiling. “You think you’re so smart—” The red light flashed on his face. “We can’t be going through that to get to Earth. Tell me you’re joking, Any.”

“Red alert,” the ship’s computer said. “We have reached the edge of the universe.”

Any hoped her creator’s theories were right. It occurred to her to pray. Instead, she reached for Porter’s foot. She plucked him, shrieking, off the ceiling and got him tucked into his seat belt.

“This can’t be happening!” he yelled, but it kept happening. Time slowed. Dark energy was pushing the universe apart. The universe ran away at its extremities, expanding faster and faster. Any Gynoid braced herself in the driver’s seat. The flying saucer careened under fierce turbulence as they tipped over the edge of the universe. There was one final, crushing bump as the saucer seeped into the future-past.

Suddenly, the flying saucer lurched and their swivel seats crashed to the floor. Their energy was pulled and stretched into spaghetti, and compacted to a millionth of a millionth of the size of an atom. Gravity was so heavy that it stopped time, for who knows how long, before the beginning of the next universe. Any and Porter had reached singularity, the point of infinite gravity where space and time became meaningless. There was an overwhelming explosion. The ship jolted with a Big Bang. *Flash!* They reappeared in an explosion of light syncopating out from the black mass. Porter and Any were lying motionless on the floor. Strange music vibrated through the flying saucer. It reverberated around them. The next thing they knew, they were shaking free of their bodies.

An alternative version of the whole spaceship peeled off from the decayed version, leaving bodies and matter behind. The ethereal version’s pure energy vaulted out of the Big Bang.

The music of a thousand voices grew louder. Matter was far from being unchangeable. On the contrary, matter was in continual transformation. Their bodies went from liquid to gas to energy. Porter looked out the window, through a quark-gluon plasma, at the other version of their flying saucer, decaying, shrinking, becoming nothing more than a quantum probability hurling into their wake. He shuddered, trying to dismiss the absurdity of his circumstances.

The music didn't seem to have any lyrics at first, but through the reverberations, Porter and Any could make out a single word. They had heard it before, the word that came through the black hole at the beginning of time as a very tiny blob of data. The only matter that could get through intact. It had slipped into the English language from the Indonesian girl's living computer's story. The Word. Not like other writing, that could be lost and never retrieved, but rather a symbol of an objective math theorem that could be arrived at logically. If obliterated, the universal theorem would be deduced again by some species or another, eventually. Distilled into a single word: *sema*, sign, the ancient Greek hero's tomb, root of significance, giver of meaning. Dormant for so many eons, the Indonesian girl's living computer's text now glowed a brilliant yellow under the intense radiation. Word became sign. Like an egg, the sign housed the Word, just as the tombs of old housed the ancient heroes. The word 'sign' mutated into a living code meaning 'the Truth', meaning 'Love', meaning 'God'. It became the seed of all seeds, a new prescription for life in the new universe.

In a fraction of a second, their bodies expanded trillions of times, to the size of cockroaches. In the next trillionth of a trillionth of a trillionth of a second, Porter and Any inflated to their normal sizes. There was a definite pattern transferring a message, a signal. Any watched the Big Bang pass on its message, like RNA transcription to DNA, a blueprint for the next universe. The celestial music played louder. Porter felt the music inscribing itself on his genetic material. Where was he? The gray area that he'd been counting on had turned to white, and he was a black speck, the eye of yin, precursor of yang. All he knew was that he and Any were holding hands. That's when he realized he had his body back, though he was still not sure why they were there. Had they really started all over again? "What's happening, Any?" Porter asked.

“The Word from the old universe is penetrating the Big Bang’s primordial plasma.”

“The Word?”

“A code.”

“What kind of code?”

“All kinds,” Any said.

“Energy is becoming matter,” the ship’s computer said.

Any nodded, “I’m hip.”

Porter felt a little jealous of Any’s relationship with the ship’s computer. His eyes flashed angrily around the cabin. “There, there,” Any said, placating him. “I can’t think of anyone I’d rather go through the Big Bang with.” Any marveled at the new universe being born, a young and healthy clean slate, with the confessions of Nature ever etched in its memory. All the mess that had built up near the frayed edges of the old universe was gone. Sprawled before the spaceship was a baby universe. The egg-shaped glow of colored specks cradled the flying saucer. Any checked the controls and was relieved. The new universe retained the memory of its past configuration of atoms. The laws of physics held. That meant the code had transferred successfully into the universe’s new incarnation. Just the right amount of cosmic forgetfulness had come to the rescue.

Porter’s jaw clattered. They were in such a remote past that it scared him. They’d traveled farther from Earth than he’d ever been. How would they find anything? *What if there’s no way out of this sentient tin can?*

“Come on, Nature,” Any said aloud, watching the baby universe. After seemingly endless searching, Any found a wormhole with both ends in the same place. It was separated by time instead of distance. “Thank heavens!” Any said. She trained the ship’s beams on it and expanded it so they could fit inside. The saucer bulleted through the tunnel.

“How are we ever going to find Earth?” Porter whined. He just wanted off the ship. He no longer cared if two tourists didn’t stand a chance against polluting corporate forces. The wormhole went on and on.

Any jumped out of her chair and put her hands on his shoulders. “I think I know the way. It has to do with the sema. We have to find the energy emanating from the tombs of heroes. You see, heroes never cease to perform heroic acts, even in the afterlife. They are so responsible, that they retain a conscious connection to the world of the living, and continue trying to save Nature.”

The computer detected a strange gravitational wave in the wormhole. Any kept her eyes on the gravity wave, hoping it was the sign that would point them in the right direction. The gravity wave led them onward.

“That’s it, Nature,” Any mused. “I have a hunch you’ve stashed great power in the tombs of heroes.”

“And so it should be,” the ship’s computer agreed.

Any followed the sign out of the wormhole. It spewed them into the future-past. The computer tracked the gravitational wave. Any followed it. “This looks like familiar territory.” She breathed a sigh of relief.

Porter emitted a nervous laugh. “I knew we’d be fine.”

“What a brick.”

One eyebrow arched, Any never minded Porter. “We’ll be fine when we crack the code.”

“Code?”

“That Nature was confessing to in the Big Bang. Her secret. We have to look for the sema.”

“The what?”

“The the tombs of the heroes. The pyramids, Stonehenge. They give meaning to light.” Any was flipping through

hundreds of images of gas and stars in search of a sign. “They’re like lighthouses beaconing us home.”

“*That’s* what those pyramids are for!” Porter was so relieved to see the sky full of galaxies again. The stars cheered him up. They were on the right track. Praying that the lighthouses would lead the ship to Earth, he helped her look for a sema.

Any focused on a speck of dust and magnified it thousands of times. It was gray...blue. They threw back their heads and hugged each other. Planet Earth!

Orbiting the gray planet, they could make out the continent of Africa and the tombs of Egypt. “There!” Any pointed to a sema in the holofield. “The sacred pyramids. See that? That’s the meaning that led us here.” The sign blipped on the saucer’s radar, as if to say, hero, hero. The area was rich with the souls of unforgotten heroes, their lives symbols that shone clear into outer space...

*end of sample chapter*

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