

“2155”

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I am being left behind. Pushing and pulling faster and harder. Working harder, needing to think smarter, more often. I am being left behind.

Ever since I came of age, an ever versatile modifiable optical display has been hardwired to my skull. Hardwired since all functional members of society now rely heavily on the benefits offered by ‘the screen’, as we call it. (The original name for the screen having been lost with rumors of its original design possibly dating back to the era before what was called the catastrophic net crash, some centuries ago. Events pertaining to the net crash, however, is neither here nor there since it is generally accepted that if history had occurred any differently, the screen as we know it today, simply would not exist.) The screen is itself a ubiquitous tool whose sole intention is to provide a true means of altering the course of one’s life. And in this aspect, truly the screen is brilliant and so wonderful that few argue as to why we require it as a people, even putting aside its vast efficient means and quite fashionable contemporary design.

I remember back when I was young, the ability to deeply understand the intricacies of the screen was a known passion for me. Even then, people acknowledged the screen as an important addition to life. And so I was led to believe that to dedicate one’s life to excelling in the discovering the technology’s possible application to reality, I would have a sense of real importance bestowed upon myself, albeit merely a subjective importance and thus illusionary.

At the time cultural interest in the screen had just exploded, effectively causing firmware updates and model reconfigurations for the technology to be released almost by the millisecond, with virtually everyone who knew anything contributing their own personal updates or exercising some degree of influence.

I had been no different.

Enthusiastically, there was a time when I would download beta versions of important updates, illegally released, just to feel a sense of superiority over the masses, mainly in an effort to truly exist on the cutting edge. For the edge offered me a position that allowed myself to recreate the definition and vision of the future through the very technology that I had a hand in developing. There was not only importance, but there was power.

But yes, there were also problems. Dealing with screen development was maddening at points, with new information filling my mind, sometimes scrambling my internal thought processes like some new form of static drugs. These types of problems were common in the early versions; they had been called bugs but as a child I had always imagined the elders to have been only describing themselves. The industrial infused screens attached to their already twisted and skinny bodies only amplified the appearance of bug-like in my child mind. But perhaps today we are all bug-like in the eyes of child, who will always appreciate appearance over function, knowing nothing of the idea of risk.

Risky indeed, was the cutting edge of the screen technology, even in a world where success is only measured after being held accountable to risk. Before my time

however the risk element had been very great, many had died. Their brains having been dissected and prodded thoroughly with electrical currents for ‘debugging’ purposes.

For this, I was lucky to have existed in a time where all bugs could be easily remedied with a timely scheduled backup of a previous mindset. This setup would alleviate any problems inherited to any of my youthful ‘experimentations’ with screening.

The screen allows for instant communication to every person, place, or system of information. It contains hardcoded methods for analyzation and the monitoring of bodily function, including behavior. It offers the view at the world beneath worlds, realities within realities, systems organized in matrices. In essence the screen’s vast possibilities offer us a sense of the infinite, a sense of space within space, virtual, abstract, but functional, and above all under our control.

Yes, there was a time when I loved the screen, very much so; unlike today.

Today, I find the only likable aspect of the screen to be the fact that I am still able to recognize the series of numbers signifying the current year in glowing ruby red digits, pleasantly located near the bottom right hand corner.

The current year now reads twenty-one, fifty-five, common era.

In my youth my greatest moments were as I began asserting my significance through the meaningful contributions to the all pervasive screen.

Now, my greatest moments lie in the moments when I am able to bear witness to the incrementation of time.

Each new year that arrives, incrementing our yearly count by one, I offer a sigh and a rare smile. Each new year brings my body that much closer to death. Yes, death, true death. Not retirement, or medically sustained life, or the periodic resetting of gene code. No, one year closer to a death by the means of data corruption, the breakdown of one’s genes over the sea of time. The original death. The animal’s death.

I have noticed that there is a distinct madness in the everlasting will to perish, yet I find from time to time that there is still quite a bit of happiness to be found in madness. A happiness like I can find no place else; a glee even. And I am sure of this fact, if only because I have lived and accomplished more than most can imagine.

Culturally and scientifically it has been argued that none of us deserve the animal death, for we are not animals, for we are not born as animals. Since we have surpassed death, because we have mastered life; we shall not die, as it has been stated.

I was born sometime in the 21st century; the exact year I have perhaps, intentionally forgotten. I was born as all are born, inside the walls of an incubator. I am the result of a series of probabilistic choices consciously made by my creators. My father was subsystem mechanic, one of many, who maintained our civilization’s underground piping systems. He was a simple but clever man, clever I say because he predicted the importance of the screen. He once said how the screen’s importance had come to him as a vision in a dream, and that he ‘knew’ he had to put in an order for a child who would possess unusual prowess in the realms of analytical thinking and experimentation. All other attributes, he felt, came second.

His standpoint was indeed unusual in a time when the popular, and somewhat standard, attributes chosen for children mainly included physical beauty through the assurance of a child possessing a symmetrical facial structure, or as was his opinion “other physical attributes that held no bearing on an individual’s life performance other than to potentially cripple it.”

So my father having paid the licence fees associated with the usage of various 'speciality' gene codes, brought or rather bought my being into existence within two weeks. And after that it was only 2 years later that I had first seen my father testing a rather archaic version of the screen.

The eventual fate of my father was an unfortunate one, the risk involved in his foray damaged him to the point that he required institutionalization when I was 16.

For this, we'll not talk much of my father. Even better since much of my life had been spent away from home, learning from individuals wiser than myself; as my father would have wanted.

I spent ages upon ages laboring upon the screen, but in the end I have discovered the folly of my actions during those ages.

If the screen offers a glimpse of the infinite, in its endless possibilities, then in terms of infinity my life contributions and existence appear to be meaningless. And if they are meaningless, then all this time I had merely been a tool, an mechanization in a vast and endless system.

If I am only to become like a gear spinning for all eternity, then I should be blessed to have my spokes grinded down into a smooth curve. Grinded down until I am purged from the system, forever plunging into darkness no longer as a spoked circular gear but as a perfect circle.

For this death, the animal death, is a blessing. The final realization of life is the realization of its necessity.

I can no longer exist as mere tool, I must become something else.

I have been intentionally mishandling my credits lately.

I estimate that it will only be so soon before I will not be able to cover the insurance required for my genetic revival.

So blissful, I can only wait. I hear that death is the one that whispers gently but beckons violently. Perhaps this is only semantics; but alas I hear the cities wail, I see the ruby digits increment, a year is gone, and I sigh, if only for the last time.