

# Eng. № 8.B. Homo Rationalis

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## **H\_O\_M\_O\_ R\_A\_T\_I\_O\_N\_A\_L\_I\_S\_**

### **(SCIENCE FICTION)**

**2023**      ***Chris MYRSKI, Sofia, Bulgaria ?1979 ...***

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[ As far as this is a whole book let us give an idea about the cover (if there are no better propositions).

**In front:** On a blue background, in the middle, hang, suspended on a rope, scales (pharmaceutical), in the left and heavier plate of which is put the Earth globe (with picture of the continents), and in the right one is seen only a stem of clover (in a pot) with four leaves, as symbol of happiness.

**On the back:** whatever, or even nothing. ]

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## **P A R T   T W O**

### **IT SOUNDS LOGICAL**

— But, father, don't talk like this! You know quite good that will be necessary to leave the home, as also everybody in Prague — said Hèlena Bèlchekova, 42-year-old blonde, to whom nobody gave more than 35 and she hoped to look the same for another 10 years. Dressed in her usual gown with multicoloured irises, big, maybe, like a home cat, because it went well with her blue eyes, she moved around in the kitchen to prepare something for lunch. Today she had a day off and wanted to cook something alone, because was tired by the recipes of the kitchen robot. On the sofa in the corner sat her father in law, Tomash Belchek, who has already approaching 70 and has recently retired, so that the whole day was reading newspapers and watching stereo, if one does not count the evenings, when he went to the local pub to meet with friends, or went to visits. Next to him at the table was finishing her breakfast the 14 year old Monika,

daughter of Helena, who should have been at this time at the school, yet still lingered in the kitchen. Tomash mumbled discontentedly:

— All, all, but without me! — and later asked: — What date is today?

— March the 12th, check in your newspaper if you don't believe me! — remarked Helena a little cool, because in the last month each time when she was at home began the same conversation. — There remain 20 days counting today, if that is what you mean.

— Hence, twenty more days life. A good perspective, and I have just begun my 69th year and hoped to live somewhere till 80, but as it seems now it is written for me not to reach even 70.

— You'll live to be hundred, as I look at you. No need to wail like a Miss.

— *I would have lived*, is better to say, if there was not this bombing. But I will not leave my home, you must know this.

— You see, Tomash, not I have invented this bombing, neither it is something about which you have not known till now. The choice of cities is done 10 years earlier, so that you have had whole ten years to become used with the thought, that on the first of April 2130 Prague will be destroyed, with the exception of castle Hradchany and Stare Mesto. Well, and the newest suburban areas, outside the center with radius of 10 kilometers, will also remain.

— You see, Helenka, I have collected money for 30 years in order to build this house together with my brother Janek. And my late Hanichka, God rest her soul, had bought every day some ready meals from the supermarket, because we have had to spare for the house, for we had no kitchen robot, and have invited guests only once in a month, or have met in various cafes and restaurants when was necessary to meet with people. And I am living in this house less than 20 years and it is still quite new and I like it. Nobody has asked me whether I want to leave the house or not, and I will not leave it all the same, but will simply die under its ruins, you have to be sure in this.

— Then the grandpa will be taken away in a straitjacket, right mommy? — interjected the daughter. — Would you allow me to went from here a pair of days later than you both, in order to be witness of this sublime moment?

— Monika, drink up your milk and go out at once! Besides, it is not right that the children intervene when the adults are talking. I have again to beg your father to punish you. I am tired of this. Quickly, that there was no trace left of you.

— OK, mommy! I am disappearing right away. Ciao, and don't bother my father with unnecessary things because you know that even without this his work is very responsible. To control five hundred square meters of robotized production isn't like, for example, to make dumplings. Not that I don't like dumplings, especially when my dear

mommy makes them. Bye-bye, till one o'clock, and don't forget that in the evening I am with Martha and Eve on a birthday by Karel Dlouhy, who is the most attractive boy in our class.

— Why Karel, Moni, wasn't this some Miroslav?

— So it was, yet ve-ery long ago — till the last Wednesday. Life changes pretty fast, mommy, don't you know this? — answered her daughter already from the corridor and shut the front door behind her.

— I beg you Tomash, don't make circuses in front of people, because even if you hid in the cellar you will again not save your house — addressed Helena her father in law when they remained alone. — Besides, you know that two days before this they will let out everywhere tear gas and some other nasty things in order to run away not only such people like you but also all cats and dogs, and mice and other animals. And you, like also all citizens of Prague, are written in computer data bases and three days before the bombardment the city is blocked and is checked where is in the moment every one of the people: in the temporary camps around, or in some other place. After this come the cleaning units in gas masks and search everywhere. Monika is right about the straitjacket, if you don't come out otherwise. Be reasonable, father.

— It is easy for you to talk about reason, because not you have built this house. Like they say, on a foreign back even hundred rods are not much.

— OK, and what have you built *alone*, when all your life you have been specialist in advertising and know nothing about building construction? You have put not a single brick, like me, neither can fix the water faucet if it becomes defective, and call somebody from the service in such cases. And you know also that can carry out up to three tons of possessions, like every one of us, and I will gather not even a ton, to say nothing about Monika. If you take by one-two tons from us you may come up to ten, although hardly somebody will weigh your belongings, so that you have not to bother at all. And your house is assessed and will be paid to you.

— And I am bothered, because I want my house such like it was, like I have built it. This is my right, surely.

— Nobody deprives you of your rights. If you want to build yourself the very same house nobody will hinder you, and in the worst case it will be shifted a bit to the side. But most of people want something more up to date and the city is rebuilt anew. — Later added. — Do you want more coffee or will walk for a while?

— I don't want coffee, I want that they leave the house in peace! Why was I not in Stare Mesto now, then I wouldn't have had any problem? And why have they to demolish a whole city without any necessity? Who wants to destroy his house let him do this, this is his business, yet I don't want and that's that!

— Such are the laws, father, you can do nothing — and she began to explain him again as to a little child, while were making the sauce for the dumplings. — In the whole United European Community each year is conducted a draw for destroying of about twenty towns with population till half a million people, and once in five years for such till two millions, as well also for some areas of this caliber in multi-million mega-cities. Prague with radius of ten kilometers falls exactly in the category of multi-million cities and for that reason it will be entirely demolished. Five years earlier was bombarded North-Eastern third of Paris and now is the turn of Prague. But this drawing is known for ten years in advance. You have known about this whole ten years and have to be also become used with this.

— Maybe I have had to but haven't, because I don't like this. And why exactly on the first of April? Couldn't they have waited at least that the summer has passed, so that I died in the winter?

— In the winter, so that there was cold in the temporary camps, ah? And now for half an year there will be cleared up everything and even some more important buildings will already be ready, and instead of to shiver in the cold in assembly houses among the fields you will be able to spend the winter in a dry and warm place, having given not even a penny from you own pocket. In any case they promise permanent homes for one fifth of the people for the winter, where the elder and the children till 15 will be placed in such homes, if they want, while the rebuilding of the whole city can continue for some 5-10 more years, without hurry. People have thought through the matters, don't bother.

— Ah, it is better if I go out to enjoy for some more time the city, while I still can, because if one listens to you he can only raise his blood pressure. If I will not be here till lunch time you can search me in the Vltava, although there is not a big hurry in this because on the third day I will surely come up somewhere to the surface.

— I am more afraid that you can drown in some mug, if will begin from the very morning, though one you can surely allow yourself. Bye, Tomash, and look to be here about one o'clock.

— Bye, Helenka, yet don't think that I have agreed with you — shouted he from the entrance door. — Till 31st of March, though, one can also live for a while.

\* \* \*

— Listen M'ihal, speak you somehow with Tomash, he is, anyhow, your father, so that maybe he will come a little to reason. — said in the evening Helena to his husband, 45 year old big, athletically looking man, with serious and thoughtful look, yet otherwise merry and cheerful, with black eyes and black mustaches and large sideburns. They were alone at home because Monika was visiting, Tomash was somewhere in the next pub, and their son Dobromir served this year

in the army and stood at camp near Prague, in which destroying he also must take part.

— What, the old one still struggles, ah dear? Well, he will become tired of this sometime. And he has no other choice. As if the war is better?

— I know that it isn't, and he also knows this, but every day murmurs displeased, if there is someone in front of him. He will make some scene to be ashamed before the people. Either will hide in the cellar, or will cry his eyes out from the tear gas, or it will be necessary to catch him by the special detachments and hold him. It is better if you both speak together like serious men.

— But, Helenka, these bombardments are conducted every year for nearly a whole century and even the preschool children know about this and like to watch the process of destroying, especially of cities with population of millions. Good that professor Dzhavar Nand'u has guessed in his time that people, anyway, create various material goods and build cities, till it turned out that it is already produced everything in excess and people have neither payment, nor other stimulus to produce something more beyond the accumulated heaps of goods, and then they begin to rave not knowing how to turn the things so that someone else becomes guilty for their bad planning. And when they don't know what to do they begin to quarrel and to wage wars for no reason at all, until in the end they destroy numerous foreign cities and kill millions of people, and those from the foreign cities, in their turn, answer them with the same. So that, if the whole affair is in this that there became less products and that were destroyed populated places and was created possibility for work and purpose in life for the next generation, i.e. if this is the cause for the destruction and it *can't* be avoided, then why not to do this in *planned* order? And so Nandu has performed the greatest social experiment of the last century, has proposed instead of to search for guilty adversaries for to destroy their cities and use their markets, and they in their turn to destroy ours and look for other markets, then why not everybody begins to destroy *alone his own cities* periodically, together with all material things there, and after this to build them anew? As simple as genius, isn't it? The overproduction is solved in the framework of community destroying the outdated buildings and businesses and in this way emerge, initially working force market, and then also new products. And in addition no, literally no, human victims! Even if there was necessary to pay for to save millions of human lives this would have been again worthy to be done, yet it turned that this is not necessary because each side could find alone enough money to compensate the damages of destruction, which money is returned later on via intensification of the economy even with some gains.

— I know Mihal, yet you see that you explain the things better

than me. I can only make dumplings, like said today Monika to me, where you command five hundred square meters with robots, this is what she said, so that you understand these things better.

— OK, Helenka, and now you also begin to pretend to be offended, like Tomash. Has he not infected you, too, ah? And I in recompense can't make dumplings, for example. Besides, they are not five hundred meters, only one automated workshop with 24 specialized machines, which can also repair themselves alone and signal half an hour before the end of the program, in order to change it, if necessary. But about the father you are right and I will try to speak with him in the weekend.

— Look not to forget. And, still, Mihal, how this money is returning when the cities are destroyed? I can't quite well grasp this.

— Do you, really, believe that the Martians finance us, dear? There exists International War Fund, which covers the damages, but it is filled by all states and after each destruction becomes more wealthy, because in this way is guaranteed work for millions and millions of people. So now the construction workers exceed 12% of working population in European Community, where the permanent army is only about four percents, including the police and various rapid response forces. And together with the construction workers gain also workers of different professions, because a heap of goods is necessary to be produced anew. And the preservation of historical monuments in this way is done better, because this, what is very precious and in good conditions, it remains, and the other things are photographed well in three dimensions, are evacuated, and after this are returned in the wholly restored, i.e. anew built, buildings. Everything in nature is renewed, my dear, this happens every year, because life is cyclical process, and in the architecture and production of before a century back there were no *smooth* cycles, and the dear God has taken his part in a violent way, when the people are not able to do this in a natural way. We are "Kings" of the production and technologies, of the *creation*, yet in nature can't exist creation without destruction, and when there is necessary to destroy the things, then let us do this planned, not chaotically.

— Yeah, clever guy was this Hindu, directly genius! — continued Mihal. — And he has done the necessary economic calculations, and it turned out that on a big scale of the order of continent from this can only be won. They have destroyed initially some village of 4-5 thousand inhabitants and after three years it has become twice bigger and much more beautiful, and then they decided that the first large scale experiment was conducted in the North-Eastern part of multi-million Bombay in the 2045, when was a century from the throwing of first atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima in the end of World War Two in the bloody 20th century. They have notified all for ten years in advance, have received helps and loans

from around the world, and have proved *to the whole world* that this is the only reasonable way for avoiding of wars and smoothing of the cyclicity of production. Were used conventional weapons, because they are more harmless to the others (with exception of the place of contact, but all were evacuated from there), and also more noisy and effective, what created a terrifying action for the 12 milliards of people on the earth globe then. After about ten years the money was returned, and on all continents have started similar activities and now is a whole century when there are no big wars in the world, but only small border conflicts, and this predominantly in the southern countries, where people are more temperament than we here — ended he and added. — Ah, but don't you want to treat the orator with a beer, wife?

— At once, dear, no problems — and she brought two mugs and two beer cans from the fridge, which he opened and poured. — I have known that you are clever guy so maybe you will succeed to convince Tomash.

— For Dzhavar Nandu, for the peaceful bombardments and for the reasonable decisions, Helenka! Cheers! — and after they drank by a gulp he added: — But you are also clever, when are able to assess me, right?

— Your health, my dear, and for the new life in new Prague after some years!

— And your, too, Helenka!

\* \* \*

— Ahoy, Dobri! — shouted private Jan Krupka one afternoon to his colleague Dobromir Belchek, when their classes for the day have ended. — Will you go out to somewhere or will stay in the barracks?

— Ahoy, Jan! I will walk a bit with a girl but will not tell you with whom — answered smiling Dobromir. — And why are you interesting?

— Even if you don't tell me I give credence to your taste. And I am asking in order that you can, maybe, give me a lift in your helicopter somewhere to the area of Zhizhkov Hill, because my machine is, in fact, of my father, and he has some work to do today, but I also have a meeting, so that I am in a hurry.

— Well, you are welcome, if you want, only that I have not yet tried it, so that if something goes wrong I am not to be blamed — answered Dobromir walking together to the helicopter ground.

— How's this that you have not tried your "Dragon", when you are driving it for two years, as far as I know? Was it on repair, or what?

— Well, one can say also so, yet it is not the same. Its model has grown older, if I can express myself in this manner. Now, look! — and they stopped before one blue-and-white two-seater helicopter in the age of about 4-5 years.

— But this isn't your helic, it is of that guy, how was he, Jrzhi

Gomulka. And I don't see here yours.

— Maybe it was sometime of Jrzhi, yet from yesterday it is already my. We changed.

— You have changed your two-year old "Dragon" for this rattletrap? I understand nothing.

— Maybe it isn't a rattletrap, we'll see now. Come on, enter it! You don't want, surely, that I raise you with my hands. Sit there and I will explain you everything, when you are so inquisitive — and they sat inside. While the engine warmed up Dobromir began to explain. — So-o, I have told you that my lot for the bombing was some kindergarten, which I have neither seen nor it interested me. And this Jrzhi had to demolish the region from the even side of "Matej Broucek" street to the odd side of "Kupetski Line", which is bordered by "Little Street" and "Zhitetska". Do you get it?

— "Broucek" wasn't somewhere in your neighbourhood, ah?

— Not somewhere but exactly *in it*, because the old ones live on "Matej Broucek" 72, what is precisely on the even side, and precisely in this region. Now you got it or still have not?

— What I got is that your region is not exactly *your* region, and that the region of Jrzhik is not his region, yet I can't see what has this to do with your "Dragon", which is no longer yours.

— Well, it has to do because this blockhead did not want to change, no matter that I persuaded him a whole week.

— How did he not want to change when you have already changed, because this is not your old, I mean, your new helicopter, but his old helicopter, that is now your new helicopter, despite the fact that it is old — raised Jan his voice, because the engine already boomed at high revs and was necessary to shout louder.

— But he did not want to swap our regions, you understand now?

— Apart from this, that I don't understand why you have changed your helicopter with that of Jrzhi, what I have asked you, everything else is quite clear to me, in what I am not interesting.

— Do you not understand: when in this bombardment is necessary to destroy your own city, in order to avoid the necessity of somebody else to destroy it instead of us after some time, and we to be forced to go to fight in some other place, so I thought that it is correct if everybody destroys exactly *his own* region, if this is possible to be done. Isn't it logical?

— Hmm, maybe it is so. Well, you are right, this is a logical though!

— Do you see? And for this reason I decided that we must change our regions, because I was born and lived till now at "Broucek" Street, and am bound to bomb this place, so that later I have been more interested to build something new and better.

— OK, let it be so, but isn't your sacrifice quite big, with this helic I mean? And was it completely your own?

— Entirely my, only that half of the money was from my father,

but he earned nearly as much in one month when gave it to me, so that I don't think he will be really angry. And Jrzhi promised to repair it for me three more years. You know that he is good at this and till now has kept it alone, don't you? And after this time I will in any case buy myself something newer. — Dobromir was silent for a while and then asked his friend. — Listen, you have made earlier, as little boy, sand castles, haven't you?

— Well, I don't remember, but maybe I have. And what of it?

— So now, when you have built your castle what happened later? Has come somebody to you and has destroyed it, yes?

— Well, so it was, someone has destroyed it and then I have smashed his nose.

— And then he smashed your, wasn't it so?

— We-ell, not always, yet quite often.

— More or less in the same way have begun earlier the wars, if you know. Where I alone have destroyed my castle and after this have erected new and better one, and then have again destroyed it, and so on until my parents have called me to eat. I quite calmly have destroyed my work, having admired it for some time, because have known that will make later a new and better thing. And really have made it better.

— So you think that people are like little children, ah, right? But they are not such!

— And why not? We all are like children, Jan, like little children who build their sand castles, and if after some time they do not fall of themselves, or if we don't guess to destroy them alone, come other children and destroy them. And you can't build something while you don't destroy before this something else, can you?

— But, listen, you have turned to be great philosopher! Attaboy! Yet if you will drop me somewhere here I will be much in debt to you. Like on this place, for example. Thanks, and till tomorrow, Dobromir — and Jan left the helicopter of his friend and descending in the underway, in order to hide from the air wave and cross the street, continued to repeat to himself: — Like the children with their sand castles, look at him! But it sounds logical.

August 1998

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## **THE DISCOVERY OF PROFESSOR KOLOSSOV**

***(From personal archive of Michael Fred, who commanded the first scientific expedition on Sigma-5 in 2183, about his***

**meeting with professor Victor Kolossov)**

Sit down, Mike, feel yourself like in your spaceship. Will you not try my cocktail of blueberries, factor K, and juice of the tree of Hrolov? It was sent to me by a friend from Second Colony. It has wonderful effect on the subconsciousness and forming of ideas, is served cooled. You want, yes? Excellent. What factor, ah? But I beg you, Mike, "K" comes not from Kolossov, but from the good old coffee. Dear friend, do not forget your cradle — the Earth! Please. So-o. ...What's new in relation with Sigma-5? They don't give up, ah? Hmm, ... bad, I'll tell you. I don't bless the colonists. It would have become a paradise, that's what they say? Yeah, but only for the people. And who has asked the pneumothrids? So what of this, that they don't understand the languages of the Earth, we understand them, don't we? Hence they could have taken a reasonable decision, if they only wanted to. Do you know, comes to me before two days one Skvortsov from the department for space news of the Eurovision, or maybe some other stereovision — I have not paid enough attention. Maybe he is a known reporter, but what of it? So, he enters, places his bones in the shown to him chair, turns the television cameras on his helmet to me, as if intends to impale me on his horns, and begins:

— Mister professor, you are the hero of the day, what am I saying — of the year — and our millions of spectators burn with impatience to follow the course of your judgements and to perceive how you have come to the brilliant thought, which opens space for work of tens of thousands of colonists on Sigma-5. How you have established that the pneumothrids are not intelligent beings? — and shoves his hand with the microphone ring under my nose. I moved away his hand, he touched something on the ring, and gave up to keep the hand on the table, at a meter distance, while I looked at him with annoyance and uttered:

— Mr. Chizhikov, ... a-ah, sorry, Skvortsov\*. I think that you have got wrong information, because I have opened no space for work but on the contrary, I am against whatever form of colonization of Sigma-5, because this will violate the ecological balance on the planet.

[ \* This is a pun because *skvoretz* in Russian is the bird starling, while *chizhik* is a siskin. ]

Well, and how is the cocktail, Mike? You ponder now, ah? Good, all right. Because you know that I don't like much these pompous reporters - handbooks. They have stuffed in themselves all sorts of knowledge bases and imagine that they are the navel of the Earth. Yet the knowledge is not only collected facts and classifications which everybody, somehow or other, can extract from the computers, but

first of all knowledge about the relations between the processes, or, generally speaking, the ability to make conclusions, i.e. to think. And the reporters of today, how they have connected themselves to the sets and talk to you as if they are walking books of Guinness, while their ability to think is on the level of some parrot, who always when hears a bit more of noise around himself begins to cry, either "brravo", or "marrmalade", or some cursing — depending on the taste of his owner. And the more I don't like them when they are under 30 and have barely finished their first tertiary education. And this "starling" turned to be exactly such person. ... Mike, I have entered the cocktail in the memory of my home computer, so that if you like it you can have a ditto pressing the third green button on the handle of the chair, and if you have become bored by me, then the second red one. You can't be ever bored by me, ah? We-ell, thanks. Only that I value not so much the good manners, as the convolutions of the brain, you know this, don't you? So-o. Where was I? Ah, there sits this quail here and continued:

— You are the hero of the decade, genius, giant, and something more on "g", yet I have already forgotten it. Then he changed the letter, went to "c". The my very name is such colossal, says he, like my cosmic feat.

— What feat, boy? — answered I to him, — I have traveled almost nowhere, if you don't count a pair of weekends on the Moon, and an excursion to Venus with my classmates in the school. I stay here on the Earth and don't think to leave it. — But he continued in the same spirit:

— Good, and how you, after all, have understood that they are not intelligent?

Well, I became bored by this, so that I also asked him in my turn: and what is this intellect? Only that he did not stumble at all but at once recited:

— The intellect is the ability of some forms of organic matter to modify actively their environment. I read this in an old book from 20th century, when they were still printed on paper, only that this about the organic matter has grown quite old.

— Excuse me, — said I to him — but from this, what I hear in the moment, I think that only you have still not grown old, yet this is manageable, with the time. Otherwise your statement is true up to such extent as it true that the seas on our native planet consist of seaweed, i.e. this is a pretty small part of the truth. You have found not a bad source, yet have not read it accurately and have understood not everything, because have searched for the definition, not the meaning. And the definition is designed only to define the subject of consideration, or with other words, *to delimit it*. Besides, our knowledge, really, grows old and after elapsing of some time seems naive, if we do not penetrate to the meaning of the things. Is

it necessary to remind you about the termites, who change actively their environment, building "skyscrapers" (in accordance with their size, of course), have army and "government" (the queen-mother), have some simplified language of smells, and in spite of this we don't consider them endowed with intellect? Or let us take another example, the "phantoms" of Eridanus, with which we have not yet succeeded to make contact, and for whom nobody has proved yet that they are intelligent, or the reverse statement. Why should they change the environment, when they alone metamorphose almost instantly, in accordance with the requirements of the environment?

Well, I became excited, naturally, but the most important thing he has failed to realize. Maybe in this old book was spoken, explained I to him, about some labour activity, i.e. about changing of the environment with the purpose of quieter life in the future, not exactly on the next day or even in the next season of the year. In other words, maybe it was spoken about some form of *indirectness*, not direct execution, of main life goal for continuation of the gender. Exactly the ability of some beings to perform decomposition of the goals, to go in a roundabout way, not directly, building in themselves some model of the real world, in accordance with which they can foresee the consequences of their actions and act taking into account abstract goals, which are not derived from their immediate life necessities, but could facilitate these necessities, gives reasons to us to speak about some intellect. Making of some tool for conscious labour activity, with which help to create new goods or other labour tools, or weapons, if you want, and so on, which must lead to gradual and continuous shortening of the "distance" between the wishes of the individuals and the counteracting to the environment, taking into account the continuation of gender — this is an intellect or reason. And, of course, if the environment counteracts, because why otherwise is needed intellect, when they receive everything ready? Here the "starling" added again:

— Now I see that the human being has become intelligent because everything what he has done, despite the fact that it not always seemed so, was related with the continuation of gender. This is really very interesting, yet our spectators wanted to know how ...

To be honest, I became angry at this encyclopedist and interrupted him:

— Mister Skvortsov, when you have understood everything, then answer me, please, why the art has appeared on the Earth, and this already by the caveman, and how with its help he succeeded to continue his gender?

But you drink, my friend, when you like the cocktail. Have you not become bored by me? Not yet? Good, this is good. ... So-o, this boy thought, thought, and, of course, come to nothing. And I continued educationally that the art is the highest manifestation of the intellect

as indirect activity! I waited for a while, in order that the said by me has made some rotations in his head and explained — after all, this is why he has come to me. With the art the human impacts on the emotional sphere of the creatures of his own kind, creating additional emotions and increasing their vitality, so that they could work more actively and create working tools, with which to adapt more successfully to the surrounding them environment. Or, with the words of the good old cybernetics: the art changes the inner model of the real world of the intelligent being and in this way affects the input filter modifying the input information in accordance with the abstract goals for aesthetic pleasure in the life. The aesthetic pleasure does not satisfy direct living goals or the procreation of gender, yet it helps for their achieving in a roundabout and more enjoyable way.

— Yes, I think that I understand you, professor Kolossov. And now, wouldn't you like to tell to our spectators something more interesting about Sigma-5, this quite earthly and, in spite of this, foreign for us planet.

Well, here I reconciled myself, because the boy started to correct himself, so that I began to explain quietly:

— Sigma-5 is, really, a big contradiction with our views on the organic life, yet not so big, that we could understand nothing, but exactly up to such extent, that to shock us and intrigue. Maybe because of this I engaged myself with its study. And the scientific expedition sent there was under commandment of my friend from my student years, the not unknown Michael Fred. — Mike, there is no need to bow to me, for I am not at all exaggerating, I simply state the facts. — And so: the atmosphere of the planet contains 76% of carbon dioxide, 9% of chlorine compounds, 6% nitrogen, 4% hydrogen, about 3% oxygen, and 1-2% inert gases. There are also seas that take one fifth of its area, but in them, due to the high concentration of chlorine, vegetate only some 20 kinds of microorganisms and about the same number of seaweeds. There are no fishes, but there are some amphibians, that live on the coast and on the surface of water basins and feed mainly on seaweeds and herbs. In recompense of this the land is real paradise, at least for the local fauna and flora. I will not describe in details the inhabitants of Sigma-5: flying, creeping, tottering, on three or more pneumo-legs, for the reason that they were many times shown on various media, so that it will hardly be found a child on Earth, who has not yet dreamed of them.

— In the day — continued I, — and the day there lasts 2.85 earth days, the atmosphere of the planet, till roughly hundred meters above the surface, becomes highly saturated with the nasty sticky spores of thousands of aboriginal kinds of plants. Some of them are high less than a centimeter, while others reach several meters, but these are all various herbs, with long sharpened stalk-leaves, ending

with pea-shaped pods, which open each day and close in the evening, for to preserve the not yet ripened spores from the chlorinated rain, that falls usually in the night. These spores in a jiffy stuck to the space suits of our brave boys, so that in order to see something they were forced all the time to switch on the wipers on their helmets. There are also mosses and lichens, but no trees or bushes. And otherwise warm — from 5 to 40 degrees Celsius, with the exception of polar areas. Proper paradise for the local animals: you sit in the sun, the food is in abundance, you just pull out your tongue and suck nectar, like from a cornucopia! No worries at all.

— Naturally, I noticed — was I explaining patiently, — that there were no predators, only herbivorous, i.e. nectar-sucking, animals. And why has it to be necessary for some animals to learn to eat the others, to develop some special teeth for millions of years, and take the risk to walk hungry, if the other animals decide to grow horns on their heads — or anywhere else? There is enough food all the year round, the climate is mild (with almost no difference in the seasons), so that if you like you may not move at all — simply lie yourself on the excrements (and they become quickly dry and harden on the air) and rise on them gradually up, because higher in the air are the lighter spores, which turn to be the tastier. And if you don't like to sit on one place only then you can also fly — the birds on Sigma-5, actually, only inflate themselves in order to rise up, and then glide easy down. During the processing of seeds is produced a gas mixture, which is lighter than the carbon dioxide of the atmosphere and it is not at all difficult for some of the Sigmians to inflate with it their skins and to fly. The same gas mixture use also the pneumothrids for to inflate their telescopic limbs to 3-4 meters length and to move to where they want. For this purpose they first shorten one leg, let us name it supporting, which is in front and in the middle, lean to it shifting the center of gravity in this direction, then expanding a little the right leg move the other, left leg, forward, put it on the ground and stretching further the right leg throw it quickly forward, swaying a bit to the left, and at the end stretch the supporting leg more than the others, and while are moving it forward and in the middle shorten it like the others; after this the whole procedure is repeated again. We all have seen these walking tripods with a ball in the middle and funnel-shaped tongue coming out of its upper part, which by some exemplars exceeds the length of one meter. And everything is peaceful, quiet, warm, and beautiful. No dangers.

The young reporter listened to me attentively and patiently, although all this factual information surely was known to him. To all appearances he tried to apprehend the method of explanation, so that I continued further:

— Exactly this made me to ponder. Obviously the evolution there has evolved only in respect of the size and the way of movement.

The food for all was nearly the same, and the way of its processing too. I instinctively accepted that the pneumothrids were the highest beings, for the reason that they have chosen one difficult and not quite economical method of movement. Maybe this was because of some important goal, decided I. Later people have begun to talk about their "cities" and their "art". Really, many of their creations looked beautiful to us. And this naive friendliness of the pneumothrids, which surely has caused many people to sympathize with them. In the beginning the cosmonauts avoided their impudent tongues, yet after it was proven that they emit no harmful, even for person without spacesuit, substances, they quietly allowed that during their trips were accompanied also by a pneumothrid, who licked out the space suites from the stuck to them spores., These natives very actively looked for contacts with the astronauts and liked all games which were proposed to them. They learned to play volleyball with their tongues, only that could not add the points and grasp that have to play in teams, but everybody played for himself (i.e. to lick better the ball out). Once to one group was shown colour holography of Niagara Falls and they all looked with tongues hanging out, literally said. Soon after this the cosmonauts have found approximately in five kilometers from their base new "city" of pneumothrids and somewhere after a month found that it resembled something earthly, and after a pair of months became obvious that this was an exact copy of Niagara Falls, only that the water was as if frozen.

Mike, do you know, if you want you can press also the fifth green button on the chair, and this twice. That's it, in your honour, I mean. Original 11-years-old "Courvoisier", from the region France. At one time it was great state, as you know. It is also today great, yet isn't state anymore but a wide area in Europe. I keep it only for special cases like our meeting. How many years we have not seen each other? Five, or as if six, ah? It doesn't matter. Your health and for the evolution of the pneumothrids! Ah, what flavour! Strong like love, or something of that kind. The civilization is civilization, but one should not run away from the nature. Industry, technologies, starships, but the natural thing is, still, something else. Made by God, sorry, the Nature, with some help on the part of the two-legged thinking animals from the third planet in one lost in the infinity star system of our native Galaxy or Milky Way, in translation from Greek. And have you ever heard that other animals have made something similar to the alcohol, ah? On the Earth no, and in the space have also not yet found, because for this thing an intellect is necessary, decomposition of goals, indirectness, and intelligent brethren we have not yet met. There are some beginnings, primordia, but there is not yet real intellect. And for to make alcohol an intellect is necessary, ah? Or how it was in Latin: *in vino e veritas*? Only that this is not exactly the same, where I say that *without intellect there is not alcohol!*

Remember this from me, in order to be able to cite it in some pub lost in the galactic expanses. So that, cheers for the intellect in the Universe! Yeah, so where I was? Ah, by the Sigmian Niagara. Then listen further:

— The made copy was, naturally, — explained I to him — monochromatic. The pneumothrids, generally, accept mainly ultraviolet rays, and their droppings, by our views, are grass-green. I beg your pardon that I call so rudely the things, but it is exactly established that in the processing of seeds their organism uses only the outer sticky nutritious liquid, and the left capsule with the seed wraps in very thin film, which hardens in the atmosphere of carbon dioxide, and in this way the seeds are glued in such forms what the pneumothrids decide to give them. In their "cities" can grow nothing, because the coated seeds are deprived of their nutritious cover and the nectar, and, hence, there is no food, so that they are forced to move out of them to graze. That is how they build their cities, if we can call so the products of this, sorry, "*anal architecture*", but they only sleep there, and this not always. One should not, however, be perturbed by these things, because the spores are wrapped quite hygienic, and besides, the pneumothrids have no sense of smell. You just imagine in this sticky atmosphere what would have happened with their noses, if they have had such organs? After some time these cities, though slowly, yet still, decompose, and in their place grew again grasses.

Now the young reporter began, little by little, to think and asked me:

— Good, but are these cities, after all, art or not?

— At first sight, yes — answered I — when they are not working tools and do not serve for procreation of their kind. These are really beautiful and finished forms, which don't help them in their everyday life, because their tongues do not become longer, neither their stomachs bigger. And what concerns their multiplication, then they are unisexual. By every adult exemplar once or twice in an year grow three (sometimes more) "boughs" on the back side of his spherical body, protected with some skinny membrane, and when by the little ones grew enough the small legs and tongues, so that to be able to feed themselves alone, they break off (or the adults help them), inflate their pneumo-legs and begin to suck.

At this place, Mike, I made a small pause. Skvortsov asked nothing, kept silent. Maybe he thought? Well, this was good, let him think a little, this is useful. Then I continued:

— And yet this is not art in the commonly accepted meaning of the word. The art, I repeat, is the highest manifestation of intellect, yet ... if it existed! Taken in itself this "art" is not proof for existence of intellect. The pneumothrids, is fact, only divert themselves, and for this much brain is not needed. There are some *beginnings* of intellect, like by our native animals, say, by dogs, cats, monkeys,

horses, and others, which like to play, and some of them try even to laugh, to provoke the people, to imitate them, and so on. But this is not intellect, because there is no special indirectness of the goals, there is not creating of tools for labour or whatever planning or prediction for longer period of time. Many animals on Earth build themselves some lairs for unfavorable periods of the year, yet no one of them can guess, for example, to plant some vegetation, so that when it grows to become his house, or to use it as food; or also to make some cage or fence, where could be possible to breed and feed other animals, which are of some use for this animal — it may use such sometimes, but if they are close at hand, so to say, yet will not do this purposefully. Though what is the degree of indirectness above which we can speak about intellect, and till reaching of it can't, nobody can define exactly. The proofs are intuitive and cumulative, but one can do nothing here.

— And if this activity is some sport? — interrupted he me. —in a sport an art can also exist.

— You see, Skvortsov, that have begun to think — praised I him. — Will we call this sport, or otherwise, is not so important. The point is not in the name, the important thing is that they simply fill their time. Don't forget that the nights on Sigma-5 are also about three times longer than on Earth, and these kinds of animals don't sleep much. They relax much, this is right, but it is because they can't eat all the time. They are just playing, and this not with the purpose to learn something useful, or in order to increase their productivity, or for defense, and the like. Not at all, because they have nothing to work, they make nothing indirectly and move only for to change a bit their food. But not this is the bad. The bad thing is that it will be so there, until something will not change on this planet, because there are *no* contradictions there, it is no fight and it can also not exist. But what paradise this can be without contradictions?

We kept silent for some time and then I continued:

— Remember, Skvortsov, that I don't approve Sigma-5 as colony. Well, there will fly robots to it, and later on also colonists. They will plant trees and grasses from Earth there, and they grow, become even higher. Will begin gradually to shift the native flora and fauna, until they will remain only in some reservations and under cupolas. Will cleanse all seas from the chlorine and will breed in them terrestrial mollusks and fishes. But then this will be exactly the contradiction for the pneumothrids, as well also for the other animals. Only then they will begin really to fight with the nature and, maybe, after some ten thousand years they could have developed some intellect, yet we will not allow them this, because till this time they would have been long ago under cupolas with their old atmosphere, or, what is more probable, would have been dead for long time. Now they are not intelligent, yes. But why should they need on Sigma-5

intellect, when even without it they have everything? Who, though, can state that if the climate changes it can't after some time appear also intellect? Yet slow and evolutionary, not like we want after a pair of centuries to colonize it already with people. One can intervene in the life on this planet, why not, but reasonably and very slow, and when there will flow several thousands of years, then again consider the matter. You see, there is on Sigma-5 space for activity, surely is, yet ... not so much for us as for the pneumothrids and some others like them. We are only to test them a little. And don't forget that the intellect is very rare "blossom" in the Universe. To care about it is the highest human task, a task for the whole homo-cosmicus.

This was, Mike, my conversation with this reporter. And you don't object to double the cognac, ah? Or even to triple it — in honour of the pneumothrids. Well, of course, you will not begin to object to me, when I am the hero of the year. Your health, hence, this time for us, not for some walking tripods. So that I called you because I wanted to thank you that you rang me from this "paradise" of planet. I have elaborated an interesting theme in this relation. What are you saying? You also have found suspicious this intellect, when have understood what meant their cities. Artistic toilets, ah? Or also anal art? Sounds good, I'll tell you. And then you rang me by your private channel. Yes, you had the right to this, and told me that your whole space experience rebelled against such manifestation of intellect, but such an argument sounded not very solid. Well, it is so, only this is not a solid argument, yet if one begins to ponder a bit ...

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