HSD 2051

What is the impact of HSD on the world in 2051?

The future has always been unknowable. Yet it used to at least *feel* more stable and predictable. While the future has never held still, it didn't always zoom away in a thousand fragmented directions. Now, as technology evolves, global markets shift, political changes divide us and create instability, we're playing an infinite game. It can feel like we're struggling to stay afloat (let alone swim) in a roiling ocean of chaos.

Yet, this is the world we live in. There is fear and darkness, but there is also love, light, joy, art, and optimism. As long as we engage in our HSD praxis, we can make choices to nurture a better future. We can imagine that future and act to bring it into being as we move forward to sustain and continually expand the theory and practice of HSD. To do that, we must make friends with and inquire about uncertainty. We must act in spite of our inability to predict and control our world. We must ask WHAT? about the patterns of the future, and continue our explorations and actions with SO WHAT? and NOW WHAT?

In every age there are thrivers and barely survivors. Thrivers will be those who find patterns in chaos, understand the conditions that influence those patterns, and take bold action to shift them. HSD shows a path, and now is the time to start.

The following scenarios represent how 20 people imagine future worlds unfolding. Their stories emerged from a conversation across the HSD community that started in January 2019. We began by scanning expert visions of the future. We looked for drivers that may shape the future, including patterns in society, technology, economy, environment, politics, education, and health. We explored those drivers, looking for similarities, differences, and interdependencies. Two sets of drivers emerged for us as most powerful across multiple sectors and scales: Inclusion/Exclusion and Stability/Adaptability. We agreed that these factors will influence the essential future for human beings on this planet, and four of those worlds are described in these scenarios.

Quadrant 1: ***Making Peace Possible: The Life of Ade in the Great Coming Together***
(Include the other and seek stability)

Quadrant 2: ***The Virtual Commons***
(Include the other and seek adaptability)

Quadrant 3: ***Meet Jack and Jill: A Tale of Safety and Its Consequences***
(Exclude the other and seek stability)

Quadrant 4: ***Haves & Have Nots: A Traveler Bears Witness***
(Exclude the other and seek adaptability)

Quadrant 1:
Making Peace Possible:
The Life of Ade in the Great Coming Together
(Include the other and seek stability)

Whakatapiri atu te Ao Kohatu ki te Ao Hou, kia tupu ake ai nga tangata, kia tipu, kia hua, kia puawai, ka ora te whanau mo nga ra kei mua.

Adding on the ancient world to the new world, then people will be prosperous, be developing, be flourishing, be productive in growing a healthy family for the days into the future.

<div align="right">Rawiri Smith</div>

Ade is sitting on the patio of their home in the Red Hills above Kingston, Jamaica, sipping coffee and thinking, "What a great place to look at the sky." The coffee was made from beans grown in the backyard and roasted in a cool new gizmo that Ade 3D printed a few minutes earlier.

A writer and teacher, Ade is sixty-five years old but looks and feels forty. After several decades of living in the United States, they have returned to Kingston to satisfy a yearning for stability and connection to family and home. They are health conscious, physically fit, spiritually oriented, and an avid lover of nature. They live with Blakely, their soulmate of 15 years, in an intergenerational, intercultural household where relationships are open, engaging, co-creative and co-evolutionary. Everyone in the community is multilingual and comes from diverse parts of the globe. They share meals, stories, music, song and laughter.

Ade's household grapples with climate change daily. In fact, back in 2017, Blakeley worked on Jamaica's Climate Change Policy Framework, which outlined what would be needed to create stability in all dimensions of Jamaican life from agriculture to water. In that era the fear of the future was so extreme that it was hard to get people to focus, never mind mobilize action. But after the initial waves of destruction due to greater (and increasingly intense) hurricane activity, humanity started to see the need for more than disaster risk reduction and response management. As severe weather increased around the world, people globally had to acknowledge their interdependence and finally recognize that if we were to survive as a species, we needed to include others and work together.

Fortunately, the world implemented enough of the agreements from the 2015 global climate talks in Paris in time to meet the target of 2 °C warming (3.6 °F). Had carbon emissions continued along the 2017 trajectory, the eventual sea rise would have submerged land that was home to 470-760 million people globally, including most of Kingston. Still, rising sea levels over the last 30 years have put much of downtown Kingston and all the fanciest coastal homes underwater. Homelessness is no longer coupled with economic class or access to generational wealth, but is the result of random, unpredictable acts of nature.

It was this level of disruption in the 2020's that spurred a seismic shift around the planet. Disruptions in climate, the economy, and resources had countries of every size scrambling in a

state of emergency to preserve life on Earth. There was a great synergetic synchronicity wherein without speaking people began to transform the toxic patterns of the past and renew efforts to come together as nations and nation states. Though sovereign and independent, these nation entities recognized the need to collectively build and innovate so as to create stable and inclusive economies and ways of life that respected all people.

Ade now works in the local community garden two hours every third day. Their favorite task is taking out weeds, as they can see results right away (local) and feel accomplishment nourishing their household and the local community (whole and greater whole). Growing their own food helps people feel whole and alive. This garden produces enough for 15 already settled families and five newly arrived migrant families. In the big cities, in addition to community gardens on the ground, there are vertical gardens, roof gardens and indoor gardens that grow food with fog instead of soil or water.

Ade's household, like others around the world, recycles water. Not that long ago, demand for water was a cause for devastating conflict. Today desalination enables water even in the warmer and drier geographies. Global space agencies have changed focus from colonizing inhospitable places like Mars and the moon, to finding ways to "colonize" Earth's hot dry deserts. Many deserts have green belts that can feed local populations and solar cells to power villages and transportation. Most surfaces of homes, streets, buildings and fields collect solar energy. Composting is the norm. Sewage and non-organic materials that used to be considered waste are converted to biogas which Ade's household uses for cooking. Everyday life is zero waste, and the drive to over-consume is a relic of the past.

Ade and their community are part of an intercultural world ecological economy. Through the work of agroecology and agroforestry, cities like Kingston have become food forests, designed as continuous productive landscapes populated by art, science and healing villages. Blakely helps steward the local community restorative healing circles that are abundant everywhere, and that assist in the healing of historical trauma that visibly and invisibly shaped human lives. These learning circles create a shared sense of history, the past and the present, while partaking of learning journeys to embody the 21st century skills needed to transform our ways of being. Art, music, conversation, language and dance are woven into the fabric of daily life.

In 2020, a world-wide concerted effort was made to link play-spaces around the globe where people practiced radical embodied imagination. Through these cellular experiences people recognized the need and opportunity to embody becoming convivial beings in order to address our complex earth crisis. People recognized the need to freely associate across differences to co-create conditions for harmony in "third spaces" thus cultivating a paradigm shift from domination to connection. In these spaces people embodied how we need to be together to co-create and co-evolve adaptive conditions that ensure healthy soil, water and air are everywhere; that biodiversity is restored and restoring.

In Ade's community and in communities around the world, people communicate in non-violent and mutually transformative ways. Everyone is valued; each person is an expert on their life experience and that perspective is honored and respected. All are committed to nourishing the "new earth" and living full productive lives. Everyone in Jamaica and around the world has their

basic needs met through a universal basic income, lifelong education, and health care that is universal, local, cultural and ecologically alive.

Ade and their community are grateful they no longer have to live with the work-for-pay social contracts that previous generations assumed. Because of universal basic income, roles that had been assigned low value in previous ages like raising children, caring for others, facilitating learning, creating and preserving culture are now considered vital because they create stability, connection and belonging even in tumultuous conditions. Given that few jobs need actual humans, everyday life focuses around caregiving for people and planet, creative expression, learning, resettlement, trauma healing, and making the complex decisions that intelligent technology isn't yet capable of handling.

The economy works because people are healthier and consume fewer social services than before. The social contract is redesigned to be fit for function and that keeps changing as people and the planet adjust to each other.

As fewer and fewer jobs exist that humans have to do, the big question continues to loom: what are we humans here for? Ade is only 65, which is less than half their anticipated lifespan, and already they have lived through the period of greater and faster technological change than humanity had ever seen, and there is more change coming. Ade believes that the most important work right now is to design, grow and support systems that nourish life on the planet, including human life, and the planet itself.

Ade remembers elders talking about how dramatically life changed after computers and cell phones spread at the end of the 20th century. But the exponential growth of technology in Ade's lifetime has made those changes seem quaint by comparison. An important difference: now technology is in service of the 2051 vision established in communities and networks across the world. The common threads of that vision (which was established and shared online) included: one world where no one has to worry about whether their basic needs will be met, and whether or not they will be safe on a day-to-day basis.

Everyday life is more and more about the journey of life itself, but that's hard to even talk about. Ade is part of the guild of poets and writers who forge new language to enable new conversations. Linguistic innovation was key for people to stop dissociating the present from the future, to get past chronic fear of uncertainty, and to be able to collectively reflect forward on the future instead of avoiding it. Concepts like "work" or "retirement" have changed so fundamentally that new words were needed (and are still coined almost daily).

Guilds like Ade's have restored the most ancient languages protected in each landscape. As we learned and enriched that language, we entered our dreaming process. This collective dreaming continues to shape a strong earth-cosmos-vibration that runs through how we relate to self, each other and the earth.

Ade savors another sip of coffee, looks up big blue Jamaican sky, and thinks to themself:

2051 warp and weft,
Creative tension makes the piece possible.
Curiosity creating conditions for patterns we have chosen.
Over and under,
Across and down,
Strength and stability through difference,
As the loom holds our space.
Single threads spun independently,
Then their fibers join as fabric.
Long, strong yarns,
Different hues,
Distinguished by history,
Then unified by promise.
Knotted and embellished
Smooth,
Then rough in places,
Nonetheless held together.
Creative tension makes the *peace* possible.

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Quadrant 2:
The Virtual Commons
(Include the other and seek adaptability)

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The virtual Commons of 2051 is shaped by algorithms, artificial intelligence, and global networks that advance the full range of inclusion and adaptability. Real-time language translation, virtual reality experiences that help develop empathy, and algorithms that break down eons-old news and information silos are opening up untold opportunities for bridging differences and nurturing reciprocal relationships.

Grounded in this new technology, our world is moving closer to the ideal envisioned by author, educator and activist Parker J. Palmer in 1983. Specifically:

Functions of public life:
- Fear of the stranger is faced and dealt with
- Scarce resources are shared and abundance is generated
- Conflict occurs and is resolved
- Life is given color, texture, drama, a festive air
- People are drawn out of themselves
- Mutual responsibility becomes evident, and mutual aid possible
- Opinions become audible and accountable
- Vision is projected and projects are attempted
- People are empowered and protected against power[1]

This is no easy or comfortable transition. Creativity necessitates risk. Growth is often messy and frightening. Yet as our world seeks to adapt to changes while reaching out our arms to envelop and protect others, bright spots emerge from the chaos and illuminate our way forward.

There's a worldwide surge in new technologies.

As climate change wreaks its havoc, nations are engaged in an Energy Race. The next generation of nuclear reactors promises to halt climate change, boost the economy with high paying jobs, turn seawater into drinking water, and provide resilient power, hydrogen fuel production, and energy for rural communities and developing nations.

Meanwhile, old titans are being unseated as technology moves ahead. Thirty years ago, AWS (Amazon Web Services) was the largest "cloud provider," providing servers, infrastructure and global data-centers so companies could quickly and cost-effectively spin up these services and tear them down when no longer needed. Their capacity to invest in land-based global data-centers were key to their success. Today, that land is being reclaimed as peer-to-peer technology takes their place. When we, as consumers, can share CPU, memory, and storage on all our

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[1] Palmer, Parker J. *The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life*. Crossroad Publ., 2006.

devices (computers, tablets, phones) with other people/peers, the desire for Amazon's AWS services will shrink. Consumers will take the "cloud" back to earth and back in our own hands.

Old boundaries are dissolving.

A century of abuse and neglect of Mother Earth is now threatening human life and finally, old nationalistic mindsets have outlived their usefulness. Climate crises ranging from massive floods to widespread water shortages (which bring with them violent confrontations) are forcing billions of people to relocate. The United Nations has created a plan in which every country with means would take in climate migrants. Destination countries would be determined by lottery. A meta-system has been created to support this level of mobility and a universal passport program.

Another factor redrawing the world's maps is the fallout of unsustainable economic practices. China has claimed ownership of nine U.S. states to settle our trillions of dollars of national and individual debt. Perhaps the new regulatory environment and more accessible and integrated stock exchanges and banking systems will help us turn the corner. No one knows when we will return to our status as a producer, rather than consumer, culture.

Meanwhile, the last of Europe's traditional parties has recently shut down as changing issue coalitions take over parliaments.

Public/private partnership and technology are leading to breakthroughs in human health.

The CDC, leading medical journals, and WHO are partnering with DHL Express, Fedex to collect samples and data from citizen scientists around the world. By sharing health data we can better detect and respond to early outbreaks of disease and mitigate the impact of climate disasters on our population's health.Meanwhile, we are leveraging technology to solve deadly diseases like Alzheimer's and cancer as well as chronic conditions like diabetes. For example, "nanobots" or tiny robots as small as a nanometer (one billionth of a meter) are being used in the bloodstream where they form into groups of ten-thousand to emulate the profile of white blood cells. In their facade they flow through the bloodstream and neutralize factors that contribute to the formation of diabetes.

We are rethinking our relationship to money.

All of our global shakeups have led to massive economic fallout. As organizations change hands when new governments take over, unemployment surges to unheard of levels. Technology has taken over many tasks once done by people and it's impossible for job seekers to get trained in new skills fast enough to fill new positions. Out of necessity, Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) has been implemented. At first this led to epidemic levels of depression around the globe but, as people get accustomed to the new reality, conditions show signs of stabilizing.

What's more, international stock exchanges have dropped P/E ratio for SS/E ratio. The price-to-earnings ratio (P/E ratio), a popular indicator in decades past, measured the current share price relative to a company's per share earnings. By the 2020's it was clear that institutional value was being driven more strongly by other indicators. Machine learning was developed to gather social sentiment about a company and by 2051, economists and corporate leaders accept that social sentiment is a primary driver success, leading to the widespread adoption of a social sentiment-to-earnings ratio (SS/E) as a key indicator of a company's value.

Technology also allows money to become more accessible to entrepreneurial hubs and small investment clubs wherever they may be. For example, an Afghani women's investment club manages banking and investing through mobile apps, allowing these women the opportunity to build capital and influence the direction of their family's lives. While this technology has enabled this kind of market involvement, it has worked in large part due to the increased access to education in hard and soft business skills that were offered for several decades starting in the mid-2000's and beyond. This is true outside of Afghanistan as well, as small, localized communities around the world have gained access to managing their own money and investing in local and international markets through this new technology. The economic wealth that is growing is changing social norms and shifting power well.

How and where we live and learn has changed forever.

Expanded mobile connections and real-time language translation has increased global social capital. More than ever before, we are global citizens.
Since 2015 affluent young people have been opting for universities offering a 21st C pedagogy and a "global campus" where students study together in cohorts and live around the world. A new effort is underway to expand this opportunity and diversify the student body. For example, the Top 12 Universities in the Global Classrooms Consortium recently received a $2 billion bequest to create scholarships for young people from countries most impacted by climate change.

Powered by P2P and Blockchain Technologies, Smart Contracts are facilitating person-to-person global living as single-owner home ownership drastically declines. As populations shift and weather patterns change, we adapt by frequently moving around and living in different cities or locales. Individually, this trend provides many opportunities to learn a language and experience a new culture. Collectively, it acts like rocket fuel on our ability to innovate and collaborate.

Yet, despite all this change, we seek to preserve the patchwork quilt of cultures that have made us who we are.

For all that we've gained here in 2051, we are conscious of what could easily be lost. We still love our heritage and want to preserve it. That's why many visionaries are working to map the global cultural wisdom and spiritual practices of the many peoples of the Planet.

For example, one acclaimed storyteller, Sarah Burns, is responding to climate tragedies by creating "Lost Cities of the Pacific," a documentary film series. Burns and her team use stories from the virtual time capsules begun by local residents in 2025 to profile these communities.

Also, the Indigenous-Science Planning Team has just completed a global 50-year historical scan. It now begins "Next 100" Vision Quest project, anticipating completion of the initial planning phase by January.

We are human beings grounded in the past as we move toward the future. We have similarities and differences. Both make us strong. We remember the best of who we were as we work to become the best we can be…as we head for a future that we shape together.

Quadrant 3

Meet Jack and Jill: A Tale of Safety and Its Consequences

(Exclude the other and seek stability)

Jack and Jill have a child and live in a mid-size city-state in the western world. Their parents are Bob and Bill, Jane and Jorge, Natalia and Hashim, and Sally. Though their histories are different, this elder generation found each other as they searched for family beyond family after the time of troubles and transformation. Together, they have created a home they can all call their own and share with the "young ones" who are born of their circle. Jack and Jill have five half-siblings between them. They all live in the same city except for Jane and Jorge who moved before the grandchild was born to an exurb of the city in order to have more outdoor space.

The extended family all pitch in to care for one another at times of illness or difficulties. But health services are easily accessible via the telemedicine links provided by the government. Minor needs like vaccines or stitches are done in the neighborhood health center via machines that can scan and dispense basic care items like shots or new skin, for wound care or cosmetic purposes. Hospital care is provided in a facility in the city, but many physician services including surgery are performed remotely, sometimes by doctors in neighboring cities and countries. Critical care nursing, emergency care and long-term care needs are still provided in those facilities but with a lot more AI, robotic, sensor controlled and telemedicine support.

Jack and Jill are both knowledge workers. They are able to work from home but often prefer to go to a private work club, to which they had to apply for membership. They depend on the electronic communications (virtual reality) to connect with clients and co-workers. They also have social connections through private message groups that are encrypted, and their privacy can be completely self-regulated through blockchain technology. Most of their face time is given over to their social and family networks.

Their home can be self-regulated via electronic communication. It is cleaned by robots, and some items are designed to be self-cleaning, like the toilets and the refrigerator. There are few errands to run as most necessities of everyday life can be ordered and delivered without human intervention. Thus, they have little contact with people of different economic classes. However, Bob is a technician who works on fixing all the things that break down and he brings news and stories of interaction with other kinds of people that Jack and Jill seldom interact with.

Thanks to Jane and Jorge and several members of the family who belong to (membership restricted) garden clubs on rooftops or community gardens, they have access to a wide variety of fresh grown veggies and so do not depend completely on the 3D printed food for their diet. Food is an important class distinction. Many of the crops that are grown in rural areas are owned by cities or countries. Much of these are basic crops that are processed into raw material used to "print" a variety of food substances, reducing the need for trade outside the city-state. But water is heavily regulated and expensive, so food clubs—while providing needed social cohesion—are not available to everyone. Therefore, having access to unique food crops is a luxury.

Jane and Jorge's place is often the location of family gatherings as it is an escape from the city but close enough to use public transit. Traveling too far outside the region is difficult, expensive, and sometimes fraught with unpleasant interactions around security at the borders.

Government is largely focused on quality of life issues like climate, pollution, and food and water availability. Political parties and parliamentary government practices aren't needed, as direct democracy is the norm. So, Jack and Jill are polled frequently about their needs and opinions and the results of this polling are constantly added to the machine learning data base for the government and policy decisions are drafted and acted on in real time. There have been family conversations about the algorithms used to make these decisions and concerns about how they're affecting the minority voices. But here, where we exclude others and seek stability, just as people are starting to get concerned about something, the next set of machine learning data spits out a new way of addressing the concerns.

As long as safety and security are met for those within the region peace prevails, at least inside the city. The polling shows that people want the city-state government to protect them from life problems. This means they must ensure that there is adequate housing, food, healthcare and employment, and that often means regulating who and how many people can live in the area.. A significant amount of the country government resources goes to controlling access to the region.

Jack and Jill are opened-minded folks. They often ask for permission to join electronic forums to share ideas or learn about new things but they are quick to drop off (unfriend) if the conversation gets too tense or challenging. They enjoy the arts, attending "happenings" of theater and art, sometimes virtually, sometimes in person. The government limits the content of these activities and most people accept that but not everyone, so artist continue to push some boundaries, though they are wary of the consequences. These "happenings"—plus the private clubs for co-working and gardening—provide everyday opportunities for socializing with people of the same feather.

Jill sometimes wonders what happens beyond the boundaries, but she never asks. There are just some things we don't talk about—or even think about.

Quadrant 4

Haves & Have Nots: A Traveler Bears Witness

(Exclude the other and seek adaptability)

After decades of turbulent societal change, those with access to a variety of resources—wealth, healthy food, safe environments, quality formal education— live with a high degree of certainty and comfort in some ways. Their focus, beyond acquiring more of what they already have, is on protecting, even hoarding resources from those without. Status is fiercely defended, and the divisions are clear. The primary source of discomfort is being on the defense 24/7, and living with extreme security measures that some find isolating and impacting their freedom.

Those with fewer resources live differently. They focus on developing skills and expertise in developing and reusing materials and space as they need. They have an alternative exchange system of bartering and skill-sharing. While they live with more uncertainty regarding survival and livelihood day to day, they have become much more resilient and in some ways have a much better quality of life. They are interconnected and feel relatively free.

These general trends hold globally, noticed by emerging bands of nomads. These nomads have established safe (yet somewhat underground) travel routes, and at those route intersections, new conversations are happening that help reveal the patterns in play. Word is getting out across the nomad network, and through sophisticated secure communication, they are asking questions: are these patterns similar to those in earlier times (the middle ages, the time of empires, etc)? What is different now? How might we shift the patterns into something more sustainable for all?

It's one of these nomads who now steps in to tell her story….

The Traveler Speaks

They said the weak would rise up and band together to overthrow the strong. As usual, we defied expectations. We didn't rise up so much as flow away, a tide receding from the urban centers, never to come back in. We didn't band together, but rather strung ourselves into a loose web of pearls, each community formed around a core identity, solidified and perfected by layer upon layer of adversity.

Still, at the end of the Move Away, we couldn't trust that we would not again be marginalized. We chose not to integrate our communities, instead maintaining enough proximity for collaboration and enough distance for safety. Now, we come together once every three years to exchange information, share developments in our practices and technologies, and remind ourselves that we are united by our humanity, even if we dedicate our lives to different

manifestations of it. In between these convenings, each community appoints a Traveler to maintain its connections to the others.

I am one such Traveler, moving from settlement to settlement, a nomadic sponge soaking up other ways of doing and being. The knowledge and materials I bring back to my community allow us to keep learning and advancing, finding new ways of existing in this world. We gave up so many comforts in the Move Away, but we found we mostly didn't need them. Still, our purpose in leaving was that we might thrive, rather than just survive. We pursue simple joys that allow us to fully express our identities. Different communities need different things. We constantly adapt to meet our needs and desires.

As Traveler, I must shift even more rapidly than others. With each community I visit, I submit to different rules, practices, and norms. Some communities have resisted any form of government, insisting that it can only lead to the oppression of the past. Peaceful, organized anarchy is common. Others, though, have shaped novel forms of government, creating structures that reflect and reinforce their identities. Economies vary, and I bring goods for trade to some, currencies to others, and a simple willingness to work to a few.

What I really love seeing, though, are the different cultures that have sprung up around these core identities. Having grown up in the isolation of a single community, there was so much I hadn't explored about myself. At times I feel limited by having to center my existence on what I have realized is only one facet of myself. I feel the gaps, and the tensions where two identities intersect. But these are not things one says aloud, not if one wishes to remain the Traveler and representative for their community. Perhaps one day we will find a way to bring more parts of ourselves into our daily lives. Until then, I simply try to share the beauty and wisdom I find in every community I visit and every person I meet.

       Now, let's look in on a day in the life of one such person….

Valentinos: Fighting to Preserve Hir Status

Valentinos is 92 years old. Ze is a non-binary in the workforce now like 10% of other 92 year-olds. Ze needs work for another 28 years to set up retirement through hir death likely around age 150. Ze, like most, benefited from the UBI (Universal Basic Income) instituted in the US in 2040 but that was not enough to live in the mega cities with 75% of the rest of the world, where ze could make a decent living beyond the basics. These mega cities are not all equal. While NYC, Seattle and other US cities have become increasingly defunct and mired in legacy systems, cities like Abu Dhabi and Singapore are now home to the top 80% of the world's wealth and well-being initiatives for the second half of the 21st Century. This is where Valentinos wants to belong even if it means giving up hir US-based UBI.

So today, ze travels by off shore rocket to hir offices in Singapore for an important meeting. The flight times are 30 minutes to anywhere on the globe and after taking a boat taxi to the launch pad in the Puget Sound, ze finds hirself in Singapore within 20 minutes. Upon arrival Valentinos has already ordered hir Lyft Lillium passenger UAV through hir wearable "think" technologies

embedded in hir clothing and communicating with hir brain mesh neural link implants. The UAV arrives and ze is downtown landing on a rooftop with in 5 minutes.

Upon arrival, Valentinos' AI escort ushers hir into the 3D Telecommunications room of hir Singapore office site. While ze will meet in person with many of the team Holacracy, others will beam in virtually and "physically" sit around the table with the others in the room. Because encryption was eradicated by quantum computing in 2045, the Internet broke into enclaves, leaving the vastly larger Dark Net to be where most real business is now done. To this end, the conference today will be held in person but also through Dark channels for the virtual guests.

The meeting begins with highlights around the competitiveness of their product line in robotic emotional intelligence monitoring and ethical evolutions.

As the meeting starts, ze notices what ze only heard about in the metaverse but now sees in person – the new "killer app" kids. These are the biologically modified children of the Centennials that have more than the five usual senses and other bio-mechanical enhancements that far overshadow Valentinos' abilities. It seems they can intuit deep patterns in the challenges facing AFU and their new product development and roll-out strategies. Ze only hopes that the experience ze has will be the differentiator that allows for hir continued inclusion into this "have" team. If not, ze will have to return to Seattle where the "have-not" rates have grown as much as the elder percentage like hir has dramatically increased – beyond what the UBI and the crippled democratic governing process for addressing societal inequities can handle.

Ze cannot miss this narrow opportunity to remain relevant. Lost in thought…ze waits for hir time to speak hoping hir knowledge and hir still distinctly human intuition will provide hir that last remaining bit of advantage over AFU's onboard, embedded AI consultant avatar also "sitting" in the room. After a pause and a deeply connecting human gaze with others in the room, ze begins…

And I, the Traveler, hidden from view in a corner of the Dark Net, cannot bear to watch the outcome as Valentinos fights for the remaining crumbs of power and privilege. Thus, as is my destiny, I move on to witness the struggles of others…

Cora and Chiara: Seeking a Path of Resistance

They watched the banks of the two-million-year-old Neuse fall away, the ancient rift basins below, the ocean ahead. And they drifted. Cora and Chiara, two sisters in their 20's heed their father's request to slow down, feel peace, search out and give self, soul, wisdom and love. They drift in their world, the one their fathers' and mothers' generations had chosen and let happen, the one that had taken the native communities of nature and humans and ignored and devastated them—the world that is now again honoring those communities, strangely, to serve the rights and be the supply for corporations that dominated the rights of nature and humans. Their education was designed to navigate this unprecedented world, to be it and of it, with it and able to transcend it, to join with others and create a future that realizes their values and visions.

Cora lay on her stomach at the edge of the wood raft, sipping from one hand, letting the other hang in the pristine life-giving winter waters. As she and Chiara drifted together, her eyes stung

with the thought that so few of those she loved knew choice. So few knew that it had long ago been taken, without permission, and retooled as underpinning and unquestioned assumptions. Too many still honored allegiances to disciplines and traditions of learning that were designed not for self-actualization but to grow nations into superpowers that happily watched their human and machine populations exchange identities. She thought of the groups, her communities, spread about the world, gathering energy and momentum, growing wiser and more fearless each day, giving out so much hope to so many. The raft was jostled as Chiara grabbed the edge pulled herself from the water.

Chiara felt she'd swam miles crossing between the riverbanks that were only 50 yards apart a few decades earlier. Today, homes along the river, abandoned, were half-flooded and swamped by flourishing jungle. Taken back by nature. She felt her strength. She had always known she had too much of it, or relied to heavily on it, but maybe she wouldn't need to worry about that much longer. Neither she nor her sister were biologically or mechanically enhanced like so many others. They would age, and eventually die, like the Old Ones once did.

Bodily wellbeing was so easy and obvious now. She knew that was likely to distract her from the desperate warring for cognitive territory that would had the future to the victors. Pressures on lands and waters were moving quickly off world. No one could be sure whether the natural or artificial planets would prove more conducive to like, so experiments continue with both. And so the shielding of her Self, her identity, her humanity, was left to her, her virtual Presence and the Hidden Mind Movement to design and operate virtual prevenient protection from a world of others who were trying to rewire her brain and control her mind for power and gain. Chiara was resisting, fighting for and with the Universal Party for radical transformation of economic and political systems. Adaptation was not an option. The arts were her arsenal, and quickly becoming, again, the preeminent means of understanding and enabling the disciplined and purposeful evolution of what was increasingly recognized as the most powerful forces in the universe, human values.

Cora was lifting herself off the raft, looking up at Chiara. Chiara watched her, know they were, together, a force. Together, they did not *know* what to do. They would— as they had learned— wisely *do* so that they might know, understand and create. They hugged, kissed, smiled at each other and nodded out of their Presence's artificial cosmic silence. They both then sat up on the edge of their beds, worlds apart, and walked to their window. Cora looking out at the vastness of dark and massive ocean waves and Chiara at the line of ants on the window sill.

The Futures' Future

Moving with grace from one culture to another, the Traveler reflects on similarities and differences. Desperate to avoid judgment that could lead to personal exclusion, questions arise about choices we will make with and for each other.