

Sharted into space

A short story by Bogi Beykov

Chapter 1

Greg loved to spend time on the toilet. At work that is. He almost never set on the throne in his own bathroom at home. If he wanted to pee, he could always do it in the sink or in the shower. Anywhere in the bathroom would be ok for peeing, actually. He probably could pee on the lamp if he wanted to. The piss would probably dry off, the humidity in the air would solidify it into drops and the precipitation of the newly created microclimate would thus wash it away into crystal clear oblivion. Yeah, peeing was fine. But shitting... This business he reserved for work exclusively. It was for a few very important reasons.

First of all, his job sucked. Not for everyone perhaps but for him it sure did. It was one of those things that you do for money witnessing any form of positive emotion you previously attached to it wane and die off before the end of your probation. Going to the office in his hometown of Trotwood, Ohio, Greg felt like a whore in a Dostoevsky novel. An innocent God-fearing angel with gonorrhea who only wants to support her alcoholic family but dies somewhere between chapter 5 and 6. Naturally in a fucked up, feudal state of affairs such as this one, various distraction tools helped. Whether it be having 6 coffees a day, counting to a 100 repeatedly (forwards and backwards) or locking himself up in the loo for hours, he would do it all. He loved staying busy at the office. Working hard to come up with ways to not work was his number one passion.

And secondly, the restroom at work was state of the art. Greg was a local representative for a Japanese company. Which meant: at least 2 vending machines in the building, no cabinet being finished without a Gundam figure and an amazing toilet. Oh yes. After the latest upgrade and office renovation, they ordered a brand-new toilet from a boutique toilet Japanese company. Greg and his colleagues were extra lucky because they were selected to test out a new prototype, no one had ever sat on before nor would they in the future because the product line was discontinued shortly after. That was quite an honor for Greg in particular. He took that responsibility more seriously than life itself. Every day he would come to work early. Sipping on his first coffee he would lean back in his chair and glance at the door at the end of the corridor with a naughty twinkle in his eye. He was waiting to take his turn in the john with fingers eager to run down the buttons on the side panel like a blind pianist looking for his wedding ring. Buttons covered in weird inexplicable Japanese symbols bringing a mixture of pleasure and confusion the likes of which he had never experienced. Yes, that new toilet taught him things about himself he didn't even suspect.

Other than that, there is not much more to say about Greg. He was the kinda guy who was like a wall. In the sense that, he was always there without you even noticing him. So much so that one time late after hours one of the girls in support was leaning against him and making out with the office manager. Greg felt so uncomfortable that he didn't make a sound, so his colleagues only noticed him when they started wiping the sperm off. Just like a wall, no one at the office was capable of experiencing a deep emotional bond with Greg. The only contact he had with a colleague was when one of the short-sighted new interns got

drunk at the Christmas party and puked on him. If only people noticed him a little more, they might have at least stuck a poster on his back or rest a broomstick against his shoulder. Unfortunately, this would never happen, and he could feel the cold stare of the actual walls dominating over him with their superior usefulness and team-spirit.

His only friend in the office (and most of his life) would be that toilet. It was special in so many ways. You had the regular features like a warming up seat, different types of sprinkle pressure and temperature for even the most gentle of assholes, playing a flushing sound when you shart hard (which of course is more environmentally conscientious than actually flushing). Mind you if you really care about the environment and so happen to shart, you put your ego aside, son, and let those balls steam in the hot mist of evaporation from your bubbly diarrhea until you are completely finished and only then do you let the water wash it away. But there were some brand new specs as well - an inbuilt alarm for instance (with vibration) for when you fall asleep presumably from exhaustion, a lube applier including the lube, an ejectable plastic mouse for the prevention of curious cats from drowning, a VR headset with a trial version of Tetris preinstalled, a seatbelt, a leg belt and a very realistic fluorescent asteroid belt. All of that was hooked up to seven electric outlets with cables and tubes running in and out of the room so that if your business in the bathroom took a little longer, the core temperature of the unit would normally cause second degree burns on 60-70% of your body, cut power to the main building and cause the auxiliary generators to run on solar power only because of the EMP blast radius. Because of that Greg's boss had to call a meeting last week to set some toilet ground rules - like no one should use it for

longer than seven minutes, and no more than once a week because of the radiation.

Greg was devastated after that. Not even learning that his 7th grade crush had three abortions but would still not say ‘Hi’ back to him, crushed him this hard. He thought about taking a leave of absence but since too many of his colleagues were still in the burn unit in the hospital, he had to come to work. Taking his own life was the other possibility of course but that idea, so comforting and sweet, being in his head for too long, had become his best friend. How dare he think of abandoning this friend now by taking his own life?

And so, he was back. No other choice. One look at his calendar. No meetings for today. What a relief. If *relief* was the opposite of *relief* but with the emotional kick of *mousepad* and the lack of consequences of *paper towel*.

He looked down the corridor. A white label stuck to the door of the john. He knew all too well the painful message. It felt like the ink was directly laser printed on his heart.

“WARNING: Limited access toilet ban in place”

Below was a list of instructions, a QR code with a link for downloading a first aid app for Android and iOS and a pen dangling on a piece of rope. You were supposed to use that pen to sign your name and date of use below or, as in the case of Greg, let the reminiscence to death by hanging serve as a reminder of the inevitable existential angst of life.

A thought occurred to him. Which was surprising enough, but he didn't let the shock overwhelm him. Who would possibly notice if he went in the bathroom without writing his name on the list? He had used the toilet long enough to figure out a safe method. He even got to the third level of Tetris which is where the trial would end, at least 5 times. The secret was quite simple - splash some cold water on your inner thighs, rotate the asteroid belt 30 degrees south before you sit and then put a tiny tinfoil cap on the tip of your penis. He got that idea after eating chocolate from one of the vending machines. He had eaten it for longer than 15 consecutive seconds inevitably allowing his brain plenty of time to focus on his penis. When the first victims started crawling out of the toilet looking like homeless people from Detroit, Greg thought to himself - 'penis cap'. He remembered you could wrap food in tinfoil to protect it from the elements, even put it in the microwave - which is definitely one of the worst elements out there. Long (and pointless) story short he figured out that tinfoil was probably made during some war for the protection of objects from radiation.

"Fuck it," Greg mentally announced. Then followed it by silence and intense series of calculations. He checked his phone. Scratched his temple. Cracked his neck. And reached for his wallet to get some coins for the vending machine.

Chapter 2

He didn't even need to shit this time. The excitement of his borderline criminal act had too violently excited him leading to an involuntary butt-pinch.

“This is probably how all criminals feel.” He was getting paranoid. “*U-ha, great, I just raped this child, I feel like a God!* And then - boom, prison time, buddy. *You know what they do to rapists in prison, son?* Hm... what do they do, though? Is this one of the rules in the prison book? Like all hackers and tax scammers rape child molesters on Thursdays...”

Lost in these no doubt interesting thoughts, Greg started playing with the toilet controller and released a hot stream of water up his ass. There was something oddly obvious about doing that while at the same time fitting blocks of pixels tightly in rows, so he put the VR headset on. A Japanese toilet can teach you a lot. For instance, one of the lessons Greg learned was how to relax under pressure. This was important because this way you could get water inside your ass, then pinch and get up, go back to the office, small talk someone about his irrelevant family, head back to the toilet making small jumps on the way and sit down to shart it all out. Great skill that would make even circus acts jealous.

He was finishing level 3 again and experimenting with some new button combinations. Defying his boss in such a manly way, virtually spitting in the face of corporate America, he felt like a brave warrior. He was daring fate itself sitting on the toilet with his tiny penis hat. His fingers started tapping on the panel furiously like the Predator texting his jealous girlfriend back on the home planet. The adrenaline was rushing through his veins so hard he could hear the sound of it. It was the sound of a flock of eagles stuck in a tiny chimney. In your neighbor’s house though because otherwise it would be way too loud for this metaphor to work.

At this point as he had at least 5 different streams of liquid splashing in and out of his asshole and was on the verge of an epileptic seizure, it was understandably easy for him to miss the fact that because of the enormous amounts of Gamma radiation and explosive heatwaves, 2 of the building floors were currently collapsing and 3 were on fire. Much later he would find out that this much electric power, a specific combination of matter, energy and negative space displaced from his butthole and a lot of pure luck would create some irreversible changes in the gravitational field of the toilet breaking the local energy-momentum conservation. Much sooner he would find out that the Japanese company producing these innovative toilets made a number of random small mistakes when assembling this very experimental unit. Mistakes not with the design or basic functionality, or not even necessarily with hiring former astrophysicists fired for mental illness in the R&D department, but with the very laws of physics as we know it. All of that meant one thing - as Greg was proudly sharting inside Satan's horn and the building was being evacuated, a tiny black hole popped beneath him and sucked him right out of his office and into the endless cold void beyond space and time.

Chapter 3

Greg slowly peeped through the bathroom door before he got out to make sure there were no witnesses. That's all he cared about. He didn't notice that just a moment ago, before he pulled up his pants and got up to leave, his body had travelled over 10 light years to the planet of AEGir in the Epsilon Eridani system. Back on Earth the discovery of AEGir in the early 1990s has only been on hypothetical basis as modern science still doesn't possess

the tools to definitively prove or disprove its existence. But as Greg teleported and rematerialized so completely on its surface he for sure confirmed it. Confirmed it all the way down to every aluminum molecule in his tiny penis hat. Not that size matters.

Greg was now successfully the first human in history to travel to another Solar System and in his nervousness not to get noticed, he didn't even realize that at first. It wasn't until he made his way back to his desk that he noticed something was not quite right. His desk was now replaced by what seemed to be a pillar of pulsating light.

"That's not right," Greg categorically concluded. "Did HR move me again without telling me?"

But as he looked around he got even more confused. How long did he stay in this bathroom? The office looked much different just one buttload ago. Did they hire new interns? Why are they all wearing fanny packs with neon lights on them? He didn't remember seeing a new coffee machine earlier. Especially not one traveling across the room on a monorail attached to the translucent sealing. Maybe he was being paranoid but as he was noticing these things, he thought a few people started noticing him too and looking at him in a weird way. The way was weird mostly because as they were doing it they would slowly back off and talk to their watches. Also, one of them started masturbating in the corner.

Greg turned around and hurried back to the restroom but as he was about to open it he looked at where the paper with instructions used to be stuck to the door. It was gone now, and an IR scanner was in its place prompting you to scan your card.

“Oh, fuck me, I guess.”

Somewhere on the back of his mind, his brain was loading up the realization that he might be on an alien planet. But it probably wouldn't launch until a hard reset. Right now, he was honestly more bummed out about the fact that he might get fired which he would have to tell his parents about who would then compare him to his childhood friends.

Turning to the right Greg found a corridor which wasn't there before either but now conveniently provided a way out. Almost in a haze with his legs trembling more and more partly from shock and partly (the second part was bigger) from the increased gravitational force on this planet, he went down a series of stairs, then got onto a service elevator, turned left and got in an empty funicular that took him outside the building and into a public park. That's where he sat down on a bench in the shade of a big spruce looking tree with a purplish hue, slightly cranked up saturation but highlights decreased to about -20.

And as he sat there with his head in his hands, thinking what to do exactly with his life now and who to tell first about being fired - his mom or his dad, unbeknownst to him, a young curious gentleman sat down next to him.

“Don't move. We've got eyes on you,” the stranger said.

“Ah?” Greg looked up even more confused but as always ready to surrender.

“I’m fuckin with you, man, chill.” The young man poked Greg with his elbow and took out what looked like a joint from his pocket. “You should have seen your face. What’s your name?”

“Greg. Sorry, I’m not quite sure...”

“Greg? What kind of name is that? I’m Frida.”

Greg would later learn that in a strange but statistically not so improbable way, somewhere along their evolution, perhaps between getting off their trees and discovering fire, the sentient apes of AEGir would switch names and use female names for males and vice-versa. This was a result of a sexually transmitted virus that in time also mutated and resulted in full immunity to cringe from seeing someone wearing a fedora. This in turn had quite the catastrophic effect on AEGirian modern fashion.

“What happened to you? Where is your EP?”

“My EP?”

“EP,” the man repeated while pointing at his fanny pack. “Here...” he passed the joint.

“I’m ok, thank you.”

“You sure? Anyway. EP, you know? Emergency Pouch. Everyone is obligated to wear one at all times now.”

“I don’t have an EP. Is this like GDPR related or something?”

“Dude. I’m super high right now but I think it’s pretty obvious you are like a foreign secret agent or something. What’s your mission, agent? What is the latest status report *Greg?*”

“Well I guess I’m an agent but not really secret. I work in sales.”

“Good, because you are under arrest!”

“Well, I knew it.”

“I’m fucking with you, man. What? Why did you lay down on the ground? Get up. How did you get here? Tell me your story.”

Greg wasn’t feeling at his best. He had to force himself to stop crying for the second time in the last 10 minutes. And he was used to forcing himself to start crying normally. He reluctantly told Frida everything up to the moment when he went to the bathroom. He made it clear multiple times he knew how bad it was to break the company rules, he was sorry, and he was ready to face the consequences. Waking up earlier before going to work to masturbate that day was clearly a bad idea but he kept that part to himself. Those few drops must have been the ones that tipped over his glass of accumulated catholic guilt and would surely result in severe and well-deserved punishment.

“So, wait. This toilet you are talking about, let me see if I got that right.” Frida paused to scratch his head and continued to roll a second joint. “You are saying, you had different streams sprinkle water on your ass, right?”

“Yeah, it’s 5 of the features.”

“Ok, what if. There were some chemicals inside that water. You know? Like some powerful psychedelic compound that dissolved deep in the mucous membrane of your asshole. That’s it man! You perked up your asshole like a little princess, pressed it down the seat with all the weight of your body and combined effort of pushing and twisting. Your ass was ready to submit and tap out, man. All red with rushing blood, sweaty and wet and then out of nowhere you fill it up with psychedelic toilet water. What did you expect? Now you’re tripping balls, dude. Shit...”

Frida collapsed exhausted and victorious with his discovery on the bench and took another deep hit. What if he was right though, Greg thought? I mean where is he now? What was that strange building? What is this weird purple tree towering above him for god’s sake.

“Wait. How is this possible?” Greg jumped on his feet. “Why is the Sun split in half?”

“The *what?*”

“This black line... Running across... What the fuck?!”

“Oh. The asteroid belt, you mean. Chill. You can see it better at night.”

And then he noticed many other things that were hard to believe. Monorails crisscrossing the sky, the colors of the trees making no sense. They looked like a giant ate a rainbow and puked it all over the park. There was also a flock of feathered

pterodactyls splashing around in a pond not so far away. Greg sat down next to Frida heavy with fear.

“You don’t work for MikaCo, do you?”

“I don’t know what you said, man. But I feel you. Do you have any crackers on you btw?”

Greg started thinking. If his butt was filled with psychedelic ass-water, which would mean the wetness in his pants is not from perspiration, he should shart it out to try to sober up.

“Frida, I need to use a bathroom. Where is the closest one here?”

“Well probably in the mall.” He pointed at the building behind which Greg ran out of earlier. “But you won’t get in without this.”

He took out something looking like a plastic ID card with a chip from his fanny pack.

“The EP, man. It has all you need. Listen I’ll give it to you, but you have to return it back, ok? I’ll stay here for a while if you don’t mind.” As he handed the EP to Greg he started falling asleep.

“Ok. Let’s see if this works.” Greg got back to his feet and started towards the building where somewhere in a different world was his old office.

Chapter 4

On the way to the building Greg looked into his fanny pack. The toilet ID card was there. Plus, a pack of blue pills, a small bottle of milky substance, some instructional leaflets, a couple of coins, a pre-used sock and a plastic bag of weed, courtesy of Frida, Greg suspected. He thought he would dispose of it once he gets to the toilet. He was not *opposed* to weed use. It would require minimal traces of character to be *opposed* to anything. Something he unfortunately lacked. He lacked it so much in fact that if he got wrongly convicted he probably wouldn't appeal. If there was enough peer pressure on him to take part in a human trial of a new militarized version of anal warts, he wouldn't object. And if by some miracle of nature, he got pregnant, he would absolutely not make an abortion.

Greg decided to put the EP on. He was so non-confrontational by nature that even though he was convinced by now that either that DMT was super potent or his ass was really potent at dissolving it, he wanted to blend in and if possible avoid meeting any of the archetypal demons in his collective unconscious until he was sober again.

This time when he got back inside the building he felt a little more relaxed. He looked around a bit and it really seemed to be a giant shopping mall.

“This simulation is really something.”

He temporarily postponed the bathroom visit and took a stroll along the endless rows of shops. He must have looked very mesmerized which lead the shop staff in many of the stores to

energetically offer the finest of their products. Greg saw mostly things he would also see back on Earth. He could buy designer clothes, endless combinations of coffee and milk, play laser tag on the 5th floor or end up in the food court where if you didn't have enough money, a state lawyer would be appointed to represent you. Everything seemed similar but slightly off. The brands were new to him, some of the devices in the sex shop were really extraterrestrial but then again, he had never visited Amsterdam. In the pet store besides dogs they were also selling small dinosaurs. They never got extinct on this planet although some of the breeds now were really depressive and suicidal, not being the dominant species and all. Greg also discovered they had some amazing watches in this mall while the phones were pretty shitty. This was actually for a very good reason. Just like on Earth, watches were discovered before phones were. This way they had much more time to evolve and become "smart" earlier than the phones did. As a result of that most AEgirians used watches for calls, their version of Tinder or the famous watch game 'Angry Pterodactyls'.

If you wonder how come everything on AEgir is so human perhaps you are asking the wrong question. Because a question like that leads with the assumption that we humans are so damn special that surely even if this galaxy is filled with a multitude of similar stars and the same planets there still will never ever be another species like ours.

For as long as we remember, we have considered ourselves unique. Ever since the cave man thought his cave must be the best and no other cave can provide such an abundance of great walls for painting and beautiful stalagmites to hold on to when you take a shit. Even his cave bears, he believed for sure must be bigger and

fiercer than any other out there. The more extravagant of cave men proposed theories of multiple caves similar to this one existing out there. Some of those same paleolithic scientists claimed it was ok to also shave your beard and legs with a sharp stone and identify as a cave woman but those were quickly stoned to death. The more conservative cave men refused to even leave the cave. Some of them claimed they were living on a flat cave surrounded by ice and they could prove it if only somehow a technology existed for them to record a video about it and share it with everyone in the cave online.

But times changed. As humans got out of their caves, their vision of the immediate surroundings improved. Millenia past and those former sexually ambiguous cavemen now shaved the Earth's oldest forests to find out there were no vampires and werewolves there. They looked deep at the bottom of the ocean and besides a few Oscars for James Cameron they didn't find any mythical creatures there either. Then they looked up at the vast endless space and boldly announced there might as well be nothing there either. Not long had passed after all since we believed the Sun was circling around us.

“Well, why not,” the best scientists proudly proclaimed to the World at another lavish Nobel prize after party. “Why not just assume that the entire purpose, and a worthy purpose that is, of this Universe is to form itself out of nothingness, spend billions of years and endless amounts of energy to expand and evolve so that in one of its corners a live-bearing Earth would appear and give life to us, so we can argue if Kanye West is genius or mentally ill?!”

But the thing about Evolution is it's not something we own despite Darwin's still pending patent case. Evolution is either

much more limited or lazy, depending on how you view it. Imagine the surprise of a cave man discovering another cave with the same paintings of a fat woman. Is it possible for his wife to have been so promiscuous? The same thing must have happened to Columbus when he discovered a brand-new isolated continent and then saw some dudes chilling at the beach drinking pinna coladas. If life was the same in different caves and on different continents, then why not on a planet 10.5 light years away from Earth? Similar astral formation, same chemical foundation plus roughly the same age all equaled a place so similar to home that even language or cultural barriers didn't exist.

Meanwhile Greg wasn't so sure what to think about it all. He found out that there were different forms of payment accepted in this dimension including paying with your toilet ID card. He decided to borrow some money from Frida and use his card to buy a book from the bookstore and then go to the bathroom. There were a few self-help books that looked interesting to him. Something about *unlocking your inner self* and another one about *finding the true meaning in a few steps* or was it *in less than a week*? Either way he moved down the aisle, passed quickly by the history section ignoring all the interesting titles on the Ill-lit ages, the Monorail revolution of the 24th century or the Third World War. He finally settled for a short booklet on 101 original ideas for gifts. He liked books that didn't pose the risk of making him inordinately smarter and yet retained some of the key properties of reading such as wasting time. A few moments later he swiped the card on the toilet door and got in.

Chapter 5

Meanwhile things back on Earth were mostly unchanged. Greg must have been a pretty small butterfly because his disappearance didn't seem to produce any hurricanes or chain reactions. No one even noticed he wasn't at work until 3 weeks later. At that point the marketing team had decided to buy a new aquarium for the office and there was a unanimous vote to place it on Greg's desk. The HR manager Patricia was given the task to communicate that to Greg, but she couldn't remember his name and not seeing him at his desk, using a pronoun to address him wasn't possible. She had to pull a full list of employees and cross out every other name that she knew to finally arrive at Greg. After uneventfully waiting for him to come back to his desk for a while and simultaneously helping the marketing guys assemble the aquarium, she decided to speak to Jacob - Greg's boss. Having no clue where Greg was, as any good manager, Jacob shifted the blame on his team and asked them if they knew anything. They didn't. So, as any good team they lied and said he was not feeling well. Jacob decided to give it some time, so it wasn't until the third week and after they threw away Greg's personal notebook and Dragonball stress-ball that the company concluded - Greg had departed for a better place. Perhaps one where people gave a fuck about him.

The toilet was forgotten too. Initially after the evacuation and near collapse of the building everyone stayed away from it. Akiko from support was the only one who decided to sneak back in to quickly steam cook her vagina but unfortunately got electrocuted upon touching the door handle. This is when management decided to seal the door, so no one could ever use it.

And so, no one did. Meanwhile the Earth kept orbiting around the Sun or as uneducated people call it, time went by.

Some of the catfish in the aquarium got regularly raped between the fake castle and the Java fern which led them to jump out on the desk. Jacob promoted Patricia. Then Jacob got fired for promoting Patricia after it turned out before he made her Head of HR, he received a head from her first. Also, she was the only HR in the office so there was definitely no need for heading that way. But then again why are we talking about these characters? They were introduced too late in the story and no one cares about them.

A couple of years later MikaCo went bankrupt. This was largely due to the money the company lost on insurance and medical care for all the various victims among the users of the infamous toilet. For a while after that the office was empty. But word got around on the homeless people Facebook groups in Trotwood, so a few families moved in. Some of them noticed the bordered and sealed off toilet. Once they failed to break open the door, they decided to use the corridor leading up to it for their hoarding hobby. With time the leaking radiation promoted the growth of some juicy mushrooms on some of the piles of garbage, so the hobos started using the corridor as burial grounds for their dead dogs and the stillborn incest babies. At that point word got around on the Satanists Facebook groups in Trotwood and a lot of them moved in the office too. They made a hole in the ceiling, so the light of the full moon can shine in during their sacrifice ceremonies. Drug addicts started hanging around too as well as some college frat boys running initiation pranks for the freshmen, local rapists and of course art-house YouTube creators.

At that point another Japanese company - a former competitor of MikaCo called PagliaChi - bought the office. They flew in with their drone cars as it was expected of them in the year 2030 and received a permit from the local authorities under the

Trump Act of 2020 which authorized them to remove all of the unauthorized inhabitants of the building with lasers and/or any means of chemical warfare. After a few weeks of intense renovation, the office was going to be ready for the new company.

Chapter 6

Jorge was finishing his racially appropriate Taco meal looking over some old building floor plans.

“Paper,” he thought. “So old fashioned.”

He was slightly afraid of a paper cut. It’s just that his generation was only used to the wiping variety of paper, not this totally 2018 readable thing. He was about to wrap up and call it a day when he discovered something he hadn’t noticed earlier. According to this retro map there was supposed to be a toilet on the last floor which he didn’t notice earlier. He was leading a team responsible for cleaning the office and they were supposed to be done by the end of the day. He actually sent most of his workers home already, thinking they got it covered, but now, it seems, he had to get his hands dirty again. His girlfriend would have to wait a little longer before she could unload all of her work gossip on him. He hurried back up.

The nanobots had 3d printed a brand-new door for the bathroom and placed it in but somehow his co-workers had not gone in to clean. Jorge opened the door. The toilet was in front of him in all of its preserved and mischievous beauty. The attraction that unbeknownst to him had lured in and sealed the fate of so many before him. An attraction that was almost inviting him to

take a seat and push. And then he felt it inside him. A tiny bowel movement. An almost silent fart. It was about to happen. He closed the door behind him and took one step closer. One step closer to being sharted into space.

Chapter 7

Here are a few interesting facts we need to know about AEGir and its intelligent inhabitants before we proceed further.

The Planet AEGir also knowns as Epsilon Eridani b was formed in the distant galactic past in a much denser star system then our own Solar System. Its exact location was in-between a thick Inner Asteroid belt circling around the Epsilon Eridani star and another equally impenetrable Outer Asteroid Belt which in turn was surrounded by a huge Comet belt. And since we are talking about space, when I say huge, I mean it was pretty damn big.

The formation of a planet suitable for intelligent life in the middle of all these belts of rocks, ice, space debris and also plastic bags, because these guys take forever to decompose, can be considered a true miracle. And if you were to look at this miracle with a microscope, you probably wouldn't be surprised at all to discover it was composed of a chain of mini-miracles happening concurrently and in alphabetical order over the span of at least the last 3 billion years. The more impossible the miracles, the more possible it actually was for them to happen and this slowly lead the AEGirians to not only overcome impossible odds of survival but also become the dominant species on the planet, achieve technological prowess, sustainable economic growth and

a balanced socio-political environment. By the time Jorge visited them they had already successfully colonized their Moon and one more planet in the system.

It was rather early on in their space age when they discovered something incredible - the potential of the formerly abhorred asteroid belts. By building structures conceptually similar to windmills, they learned to harness incredible amounts of energy from the never-ending spin of space junk inside the belts. Most of it at the beginning was not used wisely. It was mainly for the purposes of industries and activities consuming high amounts of energy such as powering the planet network of ultrasound monorails, air conditioning said monorails or high intensity cardio sessions for anorexics. However somewhere around that time a brilliant scientist by the name of Rebecca Lindblom discovered you can actually use AI for things other than social media privacy abuse or search engines spying on you.

“Give a robot a fish,” he later said in a commencement speech. “And he will do nothing. Because robots don’t eat. But teach a robot to fish and if you don’t forget to turn off all of the fishing ads he will spam you with, you might learn from him a new optimized way of fishing.”

Sadly, Rebecca was later murdered by one of his sex slave robots. But not before his invention bared fruit. The combined effort of all the AI of the planet produced a proposed solution for all travel - a network of teleportation devices, placed all-over the planet and powered directly by the asteroid belt energy. The quantum physics and calculations behind the teleports were so complicated it was estimated that it would take approximately 5,000 more year’s worth of brain evolution through selective

breeding and cloning for any AEGirian to begin to grasp even the most basic of concepts. Nevertheless, seeing the incredible value of such an invention, all the countries quickly reached an agreement and began the construction of the global network. It was decided that for the convenience of each traveler, a location in every person's home should be established for the device. An analogous place should also be available in schools, offices, public buildings, etc. A place that anyone had access to and was closed off from the rest of the building to prevent any accidents from happening. And also, a location that would provide privacy of access without the need to drastically rebuild every structure on the planet. This place was going to be the bathroom. The toilet in particular provided a compact space perfect for producing a small black hole directly beneath the body of the traveler which was required for the device to work. All the toilets were soon upgraded to traveling stations and the network was up and running.

To explain what exactly happened to Greg and now Jorge, we can use the following example. Let's assume that AEGir is Italy in year 1895 and Earth is the island of Malta around the same time. The scientist who invented the travel toilets is replaced by Guglielmo Marconi - the guy who invented the radio. In that case what happened back in the toilet of MikaCo in Trotwood, Ohio, can best be described as someone in Malta completely by accident discovering a radio in 1985 too. Then by powering their device with an overwhelming amount of energy, they manage to magnify the signal of the transmitter and emit radio waves that can be picked up by someone listening all the way in Italy.

However, since this was not a controlled travel, Greg randomly popped out in a shopping mall on AEGir while Jorge happened to come out of someone's personal toilet while that

same someone's wife was presently shaving her vagina in a bathtub next to him. This was of course strictly prohibited on AEGir. Not the shaving part but unauthorized travel to an occupied personal toilet. To make matters worse, this all happened mid-sharting which created some discomfort for everyone involved in the ensued chase around the apartment. Finally, the police were involved, and Jorge arrested. He was still protesting and trying to explain himself or at least pull his pants back up when the cops pushed him back into the toilet pressed a few buttons and teleported him straight to jail.

The following day wasn't very pleasant for Jorge either. He met a number of law enforcement, legal representatives and even a psychologist. It looked like they were not only going to charge him with indecent exposure and unauthorized travel but also not caring an EP. He was trying to cooperate and explain his situation but when that failed, he requested a phone call. He didn't have a lawyer, but he could at least call his girlfriend or if she would get jealous for him spending time in jail instead of with her - his brother. The cops agreed and handed him a fancy watch, so this didn't work out either. After they scanned his body and failed to locate his birth chip, the lieutenant handling his case decided to transfer Jorge to another facility better equipped to identify him. This time they used the monorail which wasn't ideal for Jorge's mental state. They were sailing over the maze of skyscrapers towering above the city center as he was silently deciding how best to physically manifest his upcoming panic attack. And at that crucial moment the automatic breaks kicked in and all of the guards standing around Jorge hit the floor face down.

A big dark flying vehicle had un-cloaked right in front of the proximity sensor of the monorail causing an emergency stop. Jorge was strapped tightly to his chair, so he didn't sustain any injuries besides a tiny amount of poop appearing in his pants. It was some unfinished business from yesterday. He was breathing heavily and sweating in disbelief as two masked men got out of the flying car, attached themselves to the monorail and placed a few explosives around the door. One of the guards regained consciousness and tried to switch the monorail in reverse but the door blew open and he got shot in the back by a homing missile that tore him to pieces. One of his eye balls popped out and fell on Jorge's lap. The most intense eye contacts he ever experienced. The masked guys got inside the cabin, unlocked his seatbelt and quickly got him out of the train and into the flying car. A moment later Jorge was flying away into the unknown with these strangers and no one spoke a single word.

Chapter 8

“Ah, the search party arrives at last!” a slightly feminine voice announced through the dark. “What took you so long?”

Jorge looked around. “Are you talking to me?”

“Yes, I mean, who else?” and then a bit more quietly, “Did you hit him over the head or something? I told you not to hurt him.”

“Sir, I don't know who you think I am but there's gotta be some sort of a mistake. My name is Jorge, I am the manager of the cleaning crew. I was just doing my job when...”

“Wait, shut up for a second. Someone turn on the lights.”

Jorge, temporarily blinded now, was in a big warehouse surrounded by a bunch of thugs and addressed by a 40-some-year-old half obese man wearing a fedora and an over-sized dinosaur jacket.

“So, you haven’t come here for me? Are you sure?”

“I... don’t even know where *here* is.”

“Oh, thank God! You can untie him, it’s ok. I’m sorry, let me introduce myself - my name is Gregoria, but I was once known as Greg. “

Visibly relieved the man stepped forward and shook Jorge’s hand. Jorge noticed the moist and overly gentle hands of his captor. He had nothing against gay people but being kidnapped by one from the police and led to a warehouse wasn’t very promising.

“So how come you are the only person to use the toilet in 12 years?”

“You mean the toilet on the last floor of the office?”

“Yeah, I mean this is how you got here, right? You sat on that toilet, didn’t you?”

“Yes, actually I did.” He remembered that was the last time things seemed normal and familiar. What had happened after?

“Jorge, you can’t imagine how much money it cost me to have inside people on the police force all over the planet to report to me if they notice someone without an EP, with a weird name claiming to be from Ohio coming out of a toilet. So why now?”

They were now walking along the warehouse where Jorge could see hundreds of rows of robots working diligently on conveyor belts.

“Well, the building was empty for a few years. It was only a few months ago that the office was bought again, and we were tasked to clean it up. Where are we now?”

“Oh, this is one of my factories. We are building fidget spinners in this one. Can you believe that no one on this planet ever came up with that invention? It made me a fortune. That and the male unitard and solar powered calculators. Yeah, they totally forgot solar power here with their stupid asteroid belts. Listen, I made quite the progress here in only 12 years. And what makes it even more impressive is that it was actually 6 years here because of the longer orbit.”

Greg 2.0 was now ecstatic and all the more annoying. He led Jorge to his office with big windows overlooking an industrial area. Three naked ladies stood up from the floor and started feeding him grapes.

“No, stop it right now! Jack, please. Peter don’t be rude. Go feed our guest.”

Then as if remembering something he forgot to mention Greg got up and pulled his pants down exposing his quite underwhelming penis.

“I fucking knew it,” Jorge almost choked on a grape.

“*This* is huge here. Can you believe it?” he leaned closer to whisper into his ear, “It’s because of the bigger gravity, man. Big erect cocks would be too heavy to sustain the downward pull, so evolution stepped in to fix things and now all guys here have tiny penises.” He pulled his pants back up and sank back into his huge chair. “That’s why if your intention was to take me back home, I was ready to torture and kill you today. But since you’re here by accident just like me, let’s celebrate!”

Jorge wasn’t familiar with the names of fancy alcoholic beverages and strong dopamine regulating drugs on Aegir but assumed this was what Greg was now ordering his sex slaves to bring into the room.

“To be honest, I will have to kill you anyway. It’s just that your penis size and all the knowledge you have from Earth, could ruin my empire.” Greg pulled out a laser gun and squeezed the trigger. Nothing. Just an anticlimactic click. “Yeah, of course. Whoever didn’t charge my gun is fired!” he yelled.

“Listen man, I don’t want any trouble, OK? Just send me back home, I promise I will not tell anyone about any of this.”

“Send you home? Send you *home*?! It’s not as simple as you think.”

Greg took another attempt at pretentiousness by casually looking over his shoulder and through the window. Then he took hold of one of the girls and sat her on his knee.

“Stroking a pussy while I am threatening you sort of makes me a better villain, no? You are threatened, right?”

“Sure.”

“Great. Well, the thing is, Jorge, we both came here but we can’t go back. Not yet, at least. I spend all of my money and influence here to try to solve this. The problem is that Japanese shitter back home is way out of our range. The transmitting signal on our side must be cranked up to the max to be able to send anyone back. And the only solution I have so far is to hack the grid, cut off all the power from the teleportation network and redirect it to the exact location of Trotwood to make it work.”

They talked more. The conversation was flowing quite freely driven by Greg’s desire to show off and Jorge’s modest intention to verbally postpone his death. Later Jorge remembered a surprisingly large amount of detail even though the drugs kicked in pretty fast. He found out for instance he was in fact on a different planet, but that Greg was a fellow Earthling. And then a lot more about Greg’s rise to success on this planet first by stealing people’s EPs and their identities. Then by impersonating his way into local government and building a business empire on the foundation plagiarized ideas from Earth. He had told no one about his true extraterrestrial origin. With time however his ambitions had outgrown even AEGir. His plan was to establish a connection with that toilet back on Earth and send back an entire army to take the place over. He had acquired a few weapon

factories and heavily invested in R&D. In other words, he was being a complete dick and his parents would definitely disapprove of that. However, there was a bigger elephant in the room now. And that elephant was Jorge. If he came here through the toilet, someone else might follow tomorrow and ruin Greg's secret galactic conquest agenda. Therefore, he had to act quickly and mobilize his terrorist forces to hijack the global teleportation network as soon as possible.

At some point Greg passed out and Jorge decided it was time to attempt an escape. Sure, he had just learned that this drooling unconscious man will try to conquer Earth tomorrow morning but at this moment and having seen his penis from up close, he chose to temporarily allow his desire for self-preservation overcome his planetary patriotism. He silently stepped over the floor full of naked bodies and made his way towards Greg. He stood over him for a second and actually thought he might have met him as a kid. Trotwood wasn't a big city after all. As he leaned over him however the door opened and one of the guards stepped in. One cold look from him was enough to sit Jorge back down. He would have to play along a little longer.

Chapter 9

The next day early in the morning Jorge was put back into the flying car and on his way with Greg and the crew to some new location. Jorge was painfully coming to the realization this was really happening when they started approaching what looked like a luxurious mansion on top of a mountain. There were large laser cannons all over the hills up to the very top. Anyone with that firepower, Jorge thought, could either pose a real threat to Earth

or just be a very private person who doesn't want to be bothered in his house. But judging by the fact that as they were descending to the landing pad, Greg was again proudly displaying his genitalia to Jorge in the car and winking, it was probably the former. They headed inside the mansion and down a secret elevator taking them deep to some lower level. This house was just the cherry on top of the cake. The whole mountain was dug out and turned into an underground war factory. There were soldiers packing and carrying weapons around. Some of them texting their moms they might be late for dinner. They passed a few floors still under construction, a floor with cages full of chained raptors and one with what seemed to be an arcade and a bike rental next to it. As they kept descending Greg leaned over to Jorge.

“This is just the beginning. I have a few more of these bases. The first group of people we teleport will have some of my best engineers who will spread out all over Earth and start building multiple toilets. Except these toilets would be one-directional. Only shit goes in and we come out. Imagine your granny in Mexico taking a dump after a fatty tortilla and one of our raptors materializing in her ass. And once we place all the toilets, we will be ready for phase two.”

Greg must have gotten tired from all the fake enthusiasm from the whores he was paying to be around him because he seemed to really enjoy showing off in front of Jorge. He was split between killing him now and showing him his dick a few more times first. He also really liked the fact that someone from Earth would witness his plan come to fruition firsthand. Or maybe he wasn't ready to let go of the first person from Earth he had met in 12 years and someone who he didn't have to pretend in front of.

They had reached the bottom floor and now Greg was leading the way to the center. There in the very spotlight with multiple cables and tubes of all sort hooked up to it was a toilet.

“I reconstructed it from memory,” Greg’s voice cracked with emotion. “I wanted it to look exactly like the one back home.”

To the right there was a big computer panel with a tall man in a lab coat behind.

“Madam Gregoria,” he started, “We are ready to hack the network on your mark. Just to remind you Madam, we will have two minutes before the backup energy generators kick in and we lose the power. So, the first deploy will have to be within that time frame.”

He looked at a group of around 20 man, dressed as civilians with big bags each, lined up to the side.

“We’ll make it!” Greg yelled. “Look at this, Jorge, this is gonna be epic. *Kick it!* No, wait...Sorry, I need to sound more...significant for the record.”

He looked over at two guys who were following him around ever since he entered the base. One had a camera and the other was holding a boom mike above his head. He cleared his throat and asked one of the whores to bring him water. She ran away scared.

“Today, we will change history forever. It will not be the same, I tell you. Like tomorrow will be history again. But it will

not be the same history, you know? This is impossible after today. Okay. Thanks. You can press the button now, son.”

Nothing much happened after that. There was no sound or tremor. So, after an awkward pause the technician had to announce.

“Am... it’s ready. The portal is open.”

Jorge was close enough to the toilet to look inside in that moment and time seemed to momentarily stop. The toilet looked bottomless to him and a wave of awe and fear washed over him. Maybe it was his imagination, but he felt the room getting colder. It must have been less than a second but in that second his eyes saw the distant glimmer of millions of stars. There are some sights that change you forever. Seeing *2 girls 1 cup* was one of those cases for Jorge many years ago. And now this - a black hole inside a toilet. He employed all of his willpower to lift up his gaze and look back at Greg who was just about to open his mouth and give the next order. Then something came over Jorge and his following actions surprised him more than anyone else.

He reached into his pocket and produced a laser gun. The same gun that Greg was pointing at him the other night and he was able to snatch off of him right before the guard entered the room. The gun was empty. He remembered that. But no one else knew. Before the cameraman was able to turn around and refocus his lens, Jorge’s other hand was already tightening its grip on Greg’s greasy and poorly shaved throat.

“No one move and everyone listen! Or I’ll shoot his brains out.” Jorge was slowly backing off shielding himself with Greg’s body. “Don’t move, I said!”

He wasn’t exactly sure what to do now. It wasn’t like he had planned for any of that. As he was walking with his back towards the toilet he hadn’t noticed his foot got caught in one of the cables. Before he knew it, he tipped off and both him and his hostage fell backwards.

Chapter 10

“You fucking idiot!” Greg yelled as he was trying to get back to his feet.

They were both on the floor but not in the secret underground mountain base on AEGIR anymore. They were back on Earth, in the office where it all started. They had fallen through the portal.

“Should have killed you the moment I showed you my penis the first time!” Greg saw the laser gun on the ground and reached out to get it.

Jorge knew what he had to do. Greg’s people must be getting their asses on that seat and ready to confront him here at any second. Still on the ground, he got hold of one of the cables leading to the toilet and with all of his strength pulled it out.

“Goddamnit. It’s not even charged. You gotta be kidding me!” Greg was at the verge of tears.

Jorge pulled another one and then another one until all the power was cut off. He stood up and took a deep breath. Greg was crying in the corner probably thinking about all the explaining he would have to do to his parents. Jorge unlocked the door and saw one of his workers outside.

“Hey Alex, come over here.”

“Boss, we were looking for you all over the place. Where have you been?”

“Never mind. Help me get this homeless person out of here, will you? And then we need to get to work. This toilet needs to be dismantled completely. Broken down piece by piece. Call the rest of the guys, right now.”

He took one last look back at the seat. It looked regular and unimpressive now. Who would ever suspect that this very toilet was the one that got two people *sharted into space*.

THE END