

Digital Dreams

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Second edition

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Chapter 1

A trembling and piercing noise filled the air, causing discomfort in my ears. Yet, amidst it all, my sole concern remained fixed on her. A powerful unseen energy drove us apart, and though I struggled tenaciously to maintain our connection, my efforts proved futile. She gazed at me with vacant eyes, I with helpless tears. She was gone.... I was on my knees helpless and broken.

It is 2088, and we live in a post-apocalyptic era, in underground bases.

I am Liam Weaver, a technical engineer. The tapestry of society had been rewoven, eroding trust and the capacity to convey emotions or place faith in one another.

In this paradigm, a towering presence was Syntell, a corporation bestowing android companions upon every individual and fostering romantic connections in exchange for a recurring stipend. Remarkably, these androids were vested with equivalent legal and civil rights as humans. A stringent warning resonated through the domain: any endeavor to sabotage or tinker with an android's hardware and software would carry severe repercussions.

The atmosphere was polluted, full of smart dust (trillions of nanoparticles strategically dispersed by scientists in an attempt to purify the atmosphere). Yet, our world remained plagued by the cascading impact of solar flares and potent radiation, further casting a shadow over our existence.

Residing in the subterranean depths, our reality lacked the touch of natural sunlight, compelling us to rely solely on manufactured illumination. This circumstance dictated that our agricultural endeavors were confined to select vegetables and fungi that thrived in minimal light conditions. And also, the production of birds is artificial. There are hundreds of tasty ways to prepare chicken and vegetables.

There was a single religion, and the vast majority was written by strong artificial intelligence algorithms (strong AI).

The gods are digital now.

