

Mornny

DREK

by

Daniel J. Sullivan

1. A Little History

"Meat and chunks, MEAT and CHUNKS! – men love meat, and chunks of stuff SCRATCHING OUT AN EXIT THROUGH THE ANAL-ZONE ... IT FEELZ GUD ..."

That noisome commercial for algorithm JZ-2156 popped up in his field of vision, as most pop-up ads did, and rang in Morny's ears with its annoying jingle – reminding, taunting, telling Morny that this stale gray world was an inescapable "nothing place".

"You feel that!?! – that's the scrape-y feeling of pure excremental goodness! Download NOW!"

This particular product promised "savory, meaty, veg-excellence with powerful excrement effects ..." designed for "reel-men" – sure, a good crap is always nice. These algorithms, these programs, instructed the Tamh-Synthesizer on how to arrange synthetic matter from the ground up – and this included anything that could be built in a 3D-Matter printer of dimensions 3' by 3' ... pretty much everything humans needed ... almost.

This was life in the golden age of free-energy – eating food that was no longer grown, just printed (synthetic atom by synthetic atom).

For a young man in 2421 AD, life was pointless, miserable – for a middle aged man (80-120 years old) it was even worse. Morny DREK had no illusions, at his age, in his stage of life ... shit was lame ... and getting lamer at an ever increasing rate.

Doctors? Illness?

(nope)

Most hospitals and physician's offices had been replaced by "walk in rejuvenational-devices" - these were, more or less, "target and shoot" upgrade and replacement Tamh synthesizers. Beyond the crude science of genetics, these replacement parts and "extensions" (mostly for the penis) were grafted at the atomic level and the entire procedure took about 15 minutes. Sure, there were huge taxes on this - taxes so high that most could only afford one or two trips to the "doctor" every decade. So, yeah - people still died, but not for want of a cure, but because there had to be "limits".

For three centuries, prior to this moment, human beings had been exploring and settling worlds and moons and any other celestial object they could possibly settle on - humans had pushed out into nearby space.

The SOLAN Confederation, a loose government of worlds, moons and asteroid outposts, now included most of our own Solar System, the scientific research cooperatives of the *OORT CLOUD/KUIPER BELT ZONE* and the small colony of humans mining extremely valuable materials on the swamp moon of NOOBIS - this moon was one of 5 orbiting Gliese 581 c.

To get to NOOBIS you rode the "L-TRAIN" (jokingly called the "Love Train" - and yes, they used the song in their commercials) - this "train" was a near relativistic speed system of space stations that orbited in a large ellipsis, bridging space between Earth and Gliese. These "stations" were powered by the same free-energy that powered Morny's "All-in-One" home device and the trip only lasted about 30 years ... so mainly the "L" was for moving raw materials and settlers. You could hibernate, on these trips, and only age about 3 years - but for many this was not a worthwhile

trip. With quantum node communication networks, people could have "virtual" relationships with NOOBIANS – and for most, at this stage, the "virtual" was indistinguishable from real, and the Noobians weren't that interesting.

The people who lived on NOOBIS were both hated and loved – they were the ONLY people, in the human universe, who actually produce something of value ...

This is why the Noobians were often referred to using a less flattering name – "The Swamp People", a name applied because of the rather wet-conditions of that moon, and the poor grooming habits of the Noobs. Noobs are not fond of this name, "swamp people", but they like being called "noobs" even less.

To be clear, the Noobs do have some pretty messed up rituals and behaviors, and drunkenness is considered a virtue for them. However, despite their grotesque customs and rather boorish behaviors, the colonists of NOOBIS were/are tolerated – they mine the only matter/elements we cannot, as of yet, synthesize for FREE – Pison-765 (a critical element for every Tamh device).

It really does suck, because about 100 years ago (2315 AD), Dr. Gimbus Tamh of the Moscow Space Foundation discovered the secret of "vacuum energy" – also known as Zero Point Energy – and this created a shock wave in the economic world.

Vacuum energy is "Free Energy" – referred to these days as "Tamh Energy" or "Damn Energy" or "Fuck Tamh".

You would think the invention of limitless energy would initiate a golden age – and it did, at first.

The Tamh invention also fueled two of the most destructive

financial bubbles in human history and left the SOLAN economy in shambles, and civilization on the brink of madness.

Immediately following Tamh's discovery, the major conglomerates for mining and shipping Helium-3 went bankrupt.

Other energy CO-OPs were impacted as well ...

It was quite hard to sell "Good Ol' Free-Range Fission", nobody wanted that dirty shit ...

For some strange reason, in the age of Helium-3, a group of environmentalists claimed good ol' fission was better and more natural.

The "Good Ol' Free-Range Fission" movement led to break off communities which traded in:

a) relatively cheap and dangerous fissile materials
and

b) human mutation.

The human mutation gig still makes those freaks some cash - Morny almost took a job as a clerk at one of their "human-re-thinking" facilities on the Moon (Earth's Moon, of course).

The Moon, which had been strip mined for Helium-3 at the end of the 21st Century, was now mostly a toxic wasteland ... "But, a person could live in a worse place", Morny thought. Morny thought a lot about this shit, when he was "high".

Morny had read a great deal about Dr. Tamh while he was still a kid - and shit seemed more optimistic back then.

But free-energy was really just the beginning of Tamh's curse.

Dr. Tamh, while exploring applications of "free-energy", discovered something very interesting ...

Though the laws of thermodynamics forbade "free" transformation between matter and energy, free-energy made this seem mute (given that Tamh had proven something could appear, out of nowhere, violating much or most of the laws of thermodynamics). Dr. Tamh designed an experiment, utilizing very powerful gamma-ray lasers, at an extremely low temperature (1.4 Kelvin), to produce a synthetic Higgs-Boson particle – ushering in the age of synthetic matter. He called this "gamma-ray implosion", and it was almost as shocking an event as the discovery of vacuum energy itself.

[Gamma-Ray Implosion](#) led to a new technology for building customized synthetic matter – any element, even new IMPOSSIBLE elements – from the sub-atomic level up. Dr. Tamh started by synthesizing the Higgs-Boson particle, but then moved on to higher order particles, electrons, protons, neutrons, atoms and eventually he synthesized very simple molecules of Oxygen (O_2), Water (H_2O) and Carbon dioxide (CO_2). And then came the cool stuff ...

Frozen pizza was next ...

Cats – new customized domestic cats with 2 heads, one head facing forwards the other facing backwards ...

Companies rushed to design algorithms for controlling the "printer", and this was a boom time for those algo designers – and this led to an economic recovery from the energy industry collapse.

All was well ...

It is hoped, from reading this, you can guess what happened next.

The market for raw materials crashed, crapped, cratered.

Energy companies tried to save themselves, and failed.

And, eventually, this cancer of free stuff spread everywhere – to every economic good imaginable.

The commodities industry, and eventually even durable goods and manufacturing, fell apart.

This new home appliance, as ubiquitous as the ancient microwave oven, could plug into your wall and make anything – well, just about anything. Truly, you didn't need to plug it in either (unless you bought a cheap version), all you needed was a **Tamh Home Energy Unit and Matter Synthesizer Combo** and you were "cooking with gas" – as those old humans used to say.

You couldn't make a Tamh Device with a Tamh Device, that was impossible – the element Pison-765, mined on Noobis, was needed. Pison was the heaviest element discovered thus far, and had a decay rate that required replenishment – so, people had to buy "printer cartridges", periodically ... but that wasn't enough to keep everyone working, with a job.

And so the super-mega deflationary spiral began ...

Who needs to buy plates, sporks, corn-cubes, beefaroo or SPLENTAX IF you could simply buy a 3 x 3 foot box and produce all the crap that 3 x 3 foot size Tamh Devices could – including puppies, cats, and human babies (though that was banned, eventually).

Really, what would you buy AFTER buying your home Tamh Synthesizer?

If energy is free, and you could synthesize ANY compound, requiring ONLY that you have free-energy, then OF COURSE no commodity maintains its price. Of course almost every - not quite all - businesses go bankrupt after this.

While it was still a technology with certain scale constraints - like, for example, the device needed to be bigger than whatever it made - it did, however, undermine the economic relationships people had depended upon.

(law of diminishing returns, scarcity, et cetera, et cetera...)

One of the critical materials needed for the matter synthesizers could not be synthesized (as stated) and these materials did not exist in any real abundance in our Solar System. But an early 23rd century probe to this newly discovered moon, Noobis, revealed MASSIVE amounts of all the "stuff" required. A colony was settled and became a more or less autonomous and independent part of the **SOLAN System of Federated Governments**.

This led to a free energy bubble and BILLIONS of these devices were built - "The Tamh Bubble of 2325 to 2345".

But financial engineers are not to be left on their hind regions for long ...

Soon it was realized that "synthesizer algorithms" were nearly as valuable as Pison-765.

In a post energy and commodity world of market implosion, the only resource left with any value was this "assembler code". This sparked "The Great Idea Bull Market (or Bubble) of 2350 through 2378" - also known as "The Second Tamh Bubble".

This last bubble - was bubble too much.

Too many fortunes, pensions, government loans, 734501K Plans, college loans, YURT Loans, laser bike loans, Tribonian-Blood Derivatives and Brain-Oaths were priced in terms of 'Mental Energy' at that juncture.

Everything became priced in mental energy, or "Mind-Chunks" or MC's - and these MC's would be bundled into tranches based upon the I.Q. of the inventor (the person responsible for the idea - human, computer, or hybrid). Everyone seemed to be designing algos for the Tamh devices, and it seemed this would never end.

Segments or clumps of a MIND-TRANCHE were traded, insured, and ultimately calculated and verified by credible-credit-rating agencies. These were then re-sold, and re-hypothecated, and a market was created in them ... and people bet what little wealth they had left.

The "Mind-Chunk" economy expanded, and then went pop (or poop).

Tragically, but not unexpectedly, it just so happened that abstract ideas were ethereal, recursive, replicating (via parasitism), and nearly infinite. It wasn't that "good ideas are/were worthless", it was simply very expensive to protect the intellectual property - and people were angered by the I.P. assassins that roamed about, murdering info-pirates, and would have none of that.

It also turns out that most of the ideas people have are rather stupid ideas (often resulting from smoking weed) - even the ideas of smart people can be dumb ... and smart people were almost hunted to extinction when this bubble of "Ideas" collapsed in the 2380's.

At one point in the year 2375, the combined value of all "Mind-Chunks" was valued in DOLARUS (Dollar-EURO-Russia Common World Currency) @ **5.4 x 10⁴⁵⁵ DOLARUS** ...

(that's 5.4 times 10 to the ... fuck it ... big ass power of 10)

(FYI: DOLARUS is pronounced 'DOLLAR-OOZE' in the idiom of the day)

Danica GROVIS, Chairman of the SOLAN Central Bank, did not consider this number 'insurable' or recoverable, unless a mechanism for spreading the financial cost/risk could be established - leveraging other universes, time-lines, or cosmic epochs.

(a "cosmic epoch" is defined as the temporal distance from the birth of a universe to its eventual collapse)

Dr. Grovis saw only two quasi-viable solutions to this credit crisis (there might have been other solutions, but she said there were only "2"):

1. Spread the risk of these failed investments across multiple parallel universes, which may themselves have their own financial bubbles to contend with - not a great idea.
2. Defer repayment of COSMO-BONDS over multiple epochs. A COSMO-BOND was a hypothetical financial instrument whose maturity could stretch across many cycles of 'big bang' or universal creation. Some archaeologists even theorized that the "Arc of the Covenant" was REALLY a COSMO BOND from a previous universal epoch! (someone slipped a bill into our mailbox)

Problem with deferment across multiple universal epochs is

the following: you must first construct a container that can contain all financial records, seek out the first intelligent life-forms generating wealth, and pass this 'wealth' (a.k.a. Bill or Tab) on to them. Added to this, no container yet constructed has survived singularity, plus – it was hard to explain to retirees how they would redeem value (without temporal disruption).

With respect to nearby parallel universes – it was decided this would not work either ...

Parallel universes (or, other time-lines) are distributed normally – meaning two-thirds of the likely universes were clustered around the average set of likely outcomes for any chain of causality.

Our “local” probability neighborhood (for likely nearby universes) was probably like a cosmic-trailer-park ... surrounded by neighbors just as broke or bust as we were/are.

The most likely outcome for hitting up a nearby universe for a “loan” would be trans-temporal-spatial-quantum war ... not something seen as worth the hassle, effort.

Finally, no one could be sold on the idea of "passing the bill" on to future iterations of the cosmic construct – it just seemed both too impossible and too tacky/douchee at the same time. And, many realized, only an asshole "shoves the bill" into some nearby quantum state.

2. *The CASINO*

The Great SOLAN Depression was about 40 years old when Morny Drek decided to become more positive, motivated - a bit more optimistic and hopeful.

Morny was a kid (in his late thirties) when it all went to hell.

He had always assumed someone was "taking care of shit" - why not? - up until that point in history "someone" was almost always "taking care of shit" ... someone "smart".

"Why not assume this dark time would end?", Morny reasoned.

But ... as the years passed, and the years became decades, it was clear that no easy answer existed to DE-leveraging several universes worth of debt.

But then came "The Great CASINO" - and all was cured.

The "Great Casino" was the dream of Chandler Gipps - Chairman of the SOLAN Central Bank from 2390 until his death in 2410.

Chandler, who made most of his money from internet poker, had PhD's in Math, Physics and Love.

During Chandler's hey day, the late 24th Century, the internet functioned nearly instantaneously across many worlds and outposts. Google-Net (Google bought the internet in 2212) ran on a backbone of 100,000 quantum-entanglement nodes spread out in the SOLAN System. Chandler's on-line poker community had 12.4 billion players when he cashed out and joined public service.

The "Great Casino" or CASINO for short, was a simple device for both re-appropriating excess economic wealth and re-

distributing it.

Every year, since 2405, the wealthiest top 30% of all citizens in SOLAN were expected to attend the CASINO gathering on Mars - built into Olympus Mons, underground, with very nice air-conditioning ...

Each participant was expected to take 75% of their excess wealth/assets and place it into the bank of the CASINO.

All citizens could participate, at a reduced entrance fee - just 12,000 in dollar-ooze.

"For 12K bucks, if you are lucky, you could walk away owning half of Mars!" -- so the advertisements would state.

Or,

"12K BUCKZZ, YOU CHANGAZOID UR LUCCKZ" -- in the future, adding extra or superfluous 'c's and 'z's to any word is considered "ccool".

Morny needed luck.

He was 79 years old and he was beginning to turn grey.

Most of Morny's friends were now married and raising 1 or 2 sentient beings (human or hybrid or computer children) and really weren't interested in "hanging out and smoking weed" any longer.

Morny's wife had just left him and this was terrible - but not unexpected.

Morny smoked too much weed - and PAPA-KUSH-ALGO-5645.235 was the best shit out there. It cost Morny nearly 1 years salary to buy that algo, and his wife (now ex) was even less happy when he began smoking it.

So, after many years of "not so much sex", Morny's wife,

Hilda, dumped him for a middle manager at COOBIS-TECH (an algo firm) – and Morny never saw Hilda again. Morny only knew she lived near Saturn ... or ... maybe in a sea-condo on Europa or some other place like that.

Morny's work was a drag, too - hence the weed.

Morny spent his short work week coming up with even more imaginative ways to sort the MC tranches, to yield an additional, marginal, immeasurable amounts of sub-microscopic profit.

Morny Drek was getting tired of organizing Mind-Chunks, but he couldn't change careers even IF it were possible – changing jobs was against the law in 25th century ...

Morny studied MC informatics in school - between drinking/weed binges - for 20 years. This degree determined his job, and I.B.M. was about the only employer hiring at the time – so he took the job.

At work, Morny built super-sheets (trans-finite spreadsheets) for this worthless crap – every work day, for 3 hours straight (pretty extreme). It felt like a sweatshop to him.

Because of his 3 hour days (3 days a week), his "Universe of World-Craft" score sucked - just saying. He didn't even know why he worked at all, but “everyone needs a job” - so he had to be made to have one.

Morny was poor by the standards of the day.

Morny's built-in (built into his brain) dating/lifestyle/wealth/joy agent (a very smart application by the name of Darrel), reminded him daily that his poverty "gave him a prime-scorage ratio that was below par" and

Darrel said other encouraging things.

As Darrel knew well, it wasn't easy even finding women interested in human sex ...

Most single women simply printed MORGS in their Tamh device – Male Organ Replacements for Good Sex.

Morgs had 2 arms, 10 fingers on each arm, no legs, and the brain of a cocker-spaniel.

Morgs also possessed adjustable cocks, and many algo firms competed for “best cock ever” awards.

These cocks could expand, collapse, become rigid, rough, lubricated or not, at the command of the female user (or male user in some cases).

Sure, morgs only understood simple commands – but they were disposable and the safest sex yet discovered. Virtual sex was good too, but morgs were very popular with the hipster crowd because “it felt real” - more real than the grainy tentacle porn of GOOGLE-NET.

Morny wasn't simply competing against other men and morgs for women - he was competing with the age, the era, he lived in ... women had options ... men had options too ... human relationships were in decline, and many simply chose to live alone and die alone (cuddling with morgs).

For Morny this was a desperate time – and his loneliness was a sickness without an obvious cure.

“Morny, I estimate a 1/200 chance that you will get laid by a real-woman in the next 20 years ...”, Darrel quipped.

Darrel – that A.I. fuck ...

But Darrel was just being honest.

"Fuck you Darrel ..."

"Fuck me – what the fuck did I ever do to you ... Morny?"

"Darrel, just leave me alone ..."

"You're sad – you need a hug", Darrel couldn't hug – but Darrel could order Morny's synth-unit to print worgs – the female equivalent of morgs ... not nearly as popular with the men as you might think.

Darrel, in his own naïve computer brain way, was simply stating the obvious – no dollar-ooze, no dames.

Morny Drek, who had 12,000 of dollar-ooze in savings (almost enough for a trip to ROMANCULA – The Pleasure, Hookup, vampire-themed, Booty-Call Planetoid – also known as VENUS 2.0), had a scheme ...

A plan ...

[Side Note: Venus was the only planet, thus far, to be 'successfully' terraformed – hence Venus 2.0]

Morny wasn't that smart ...

Well ...

Morny was about average for his age group – with cybo-jack-addons from the synth-machines his I.Q. was about 344.

His boss liked him, but Morny would never be promoted – and his boss had untreated halitosis.

His boss was 50 years younger and had attended graduate school on EARTH (so, Morny didn't rank well compared to his boss). "Fuck my boss", is all Morny could think when staring at those fucking giant spreadsheets.

According to Darrel, Morny's odds of anything other than

SYNLO (SYNLO or "Synthetic Love" is a drug designed and manufactured by Eli-Lilly-Merk-Monsanto-Apple) was less than 12% over a one hundred year period - less than 0.0005% any time soon (next couple of months). Darrel would often adjust odds, a little - so Morny would feel a little better.

Darrel also suggested that Morny "stop smoking weed for a while and maybe go for a walk".

"Morny ... you fat fuck ... get up ... I'm a machine and I get tired of seeing this."

Darrel was not good at motivating speeches, but he didn't need to be - he was always in Morny's mind ... taunting him. Walking or "doing stuff" was not on Morny's agenda - nor his forte.

Morny took great pride in his laziness, his sloth, an art-form for him, a science - he actually believed it was possible to transcend work by simply ignoring it. Of course entropy continued to mock him in his ignorance and idleness, but Morny did not concern himself with this.

But Morny was ready to change all of this, to set goals ... (Morny was devising a scheme and getting focused)

3. *Martian Vacation*

Morny worked on Titan, for I.B.M. - I.B.M. owned most of the main-frame and data storage and disaster recovery stations in the SOLAN system, they were/are big.

Of the disaster recovery nodes you could work at, Titan was about the worst.

When Morny would tell a prospective girlfriend where he lived/worked, the outcome would always be the same - "thanks, good bye ... loser".

(morgs won, once again)

MARS was always a great break from being on dingy, dirty, wet, nasty TITAN (referred, archaically, as the "Seattle, Washington" of the Solar System).

So, several months ago, Morny went on his annual three month vacation - a vacation on Mars.

Morny's family had a small bunker on Mars, left over from exploration days - this is where he would stay when visiting, relaxing. He would watch old movies on a near dilapidated DVD player - and it felt rustic.

While exploring his family's old bunker, during this much overdue break, Morny came across a rather strange old digital recording (all recording and computing since the late 23rd Century used silicon-based-bacterial-computing and storage [SBBCS] - digital integrated circuit media was very old school - DVDs were considered ancient). Of course, NOOBIANS (the colonists and miners of NOOBIS) still used many forms of old media - but mostly because they claimed "it sounded better". This recording Morny found was homemade - produced by an ancestor ... many, many, years

earlier.

It was his old great-Uncle Jorgen who worked as a janitor at the same laboratory as Dr. Tamh (in Moscow).

Mr. Drek sat and listened intently to the old Lucas-FUXUZ INC. surround sound -- very archaic, but not bad sounding ...

"To anyone listening, My name is Jorgen Tul. I worked a long time ago as janitor at the Moscow Space Labs, about the time Vacuum-Energy was invented ... by that douche, Dr. Tamh. Late one night, I was grabbing a ZIGAROID (Healthy Cigarettes), and Dr. Tamh was grabbing 'A ZIG' as well - je said, 'Ya know Jorgen, I am afraid that nothing should be free ...' Quite seriously, I did not know what the hell he was talking about. Listen... I don't have much time and this old equipment is shit ... Tamh told me about a device, thingy, he was going to hide on Mars ... One night, while smoking and drinking - Tamh revealed the location and the purpose of this weird thingy ... 'Jorgenz, you must know, nothing should be free. So I have built in a sunset clause to free energy and shit - I call it REMOVIX (trade-mark pending) ...' He had built a device that acted as an 'entropy-sink' or something or other... I don't know. I'm sorry. I just don't know. I found it and I stole it and I hid it myself, buried in the lowest level of our bunker ... Where the mars' red ground is uncovered ... where my pornos are hidden ..."

Morny kept listening, and took notes, and eventually found the device.

He suspected the value of the device was ... well ... "a lot" - but "a lot" was not a number.

In an age of "free shit", the ability to remove shit without engineering a super-massive black hole was ... well ... priceless. Morny also suspected, if he revealed this, he would be killed (Morny was dumb, but not stupid).

The device had a GWAVE interface which made connecting it to his phone, via Q-Tooth, quite simple.

(of course, Morny's "mobile phone" was really a hive of silicon-based bacteria living in the temporal lobe of his brain ... but you get the point)

Q-Tooth was a technology developed after IBM successfully sent the first message via quantum entanglement in the early 21st century.

Alas, Q-Tooth only had a range of 300 miles.

Ominously, there was something else that occurred to Morny - he might be able to use the device as a way to upset the odds at "THE CASINO". The device had built-in EDU-FIRM - a form of non-crappy documentation, for "teaching people how to use shit", which explained the various modes of the "device".

One device mode of the REMOVIX entropy-sink was labeled "non-happening".

Non-happening amounted to disturbing causal-chains in such a way that unlikely events became more likely, and vice-versa - and this could be targeted, focused.

Morny spent most of his vacation, or what was left of it, learning to use "non-happening" mode and he smoked weed while doing so.

Morny would focus the device on some space, like the table-top, and play the "coin flip game" - coins were not used

for currency in the 25th century, coins were only used for making difficult choices.

Each time he flipped the coin, it tended "heads" or "tails" dependent upon the amount of energy applied. The device had its own free-energy power unit – so it could be used anywhere. The device could project causal and material "negative events" from great distances – it had a 1,000 mile radius.

Morny theorized (really, he was doing quite well for a dummy of 344 IQ) that the entropy-sink device was really a pump or entropy re-direction device, or some such cosmological dream-catcher.

Morny could, with the right programming, impact local events by upsetting randomness due to natural background chaos (or the flux of the infinitesimal that is in contact with macro-causality). By impacting randomness, and lowering central-tendency likelihoods within certain regions of space, Morny could cheat the CASINO – HE COULD BE A WINNER.

(as long as the odds of success could be bent)

"I am fucking tired of 9 hour weeks, now I can break out and free myself..." - Morny imagined.

And Morny imagined more sex – any amount greater than zero would be more.

Even more, Morny thought of this as some holy crusade against lameness, like in the good old days, when actresses and actors would fly to Africa to eat children - humanitarian work.

"One time, the mutant Brangelina, went to Africa and ate 20

babies ... what a nice fucking person."

(historical truth is not a priority in the future)

From Morny's perspective, Dr. Tamh must have known that his "free shit" invention would be a disaster – so, Dr. Tamh built in a "back door" to universal solidity.

Dr. Tamh must have known that our economy would eventually crash as a result of "free shit", but Tamh also felt that ancient and devilish urge to create – as all scientist types do – and out of his creation came an overturning of physics and finance.

Morny didn't want to set the clock back, he didn't want to bring back the worst parts of the "depression".

Morny wanted to make dollar-ooze – that's all ...

Morny wasn't really a humanitarian, but liked to think that stealing from the richest folk in the parsec can't be entirely evil – not completely (or maybe his Neo-Catholic indoctrination had failed him).

It is of no importance, however you synth-it – Morny had a get rich quick scheme, in his hands, ready to go. Morny needed to beef up his odds of getting laid (according to Darrel, his asshole-artificially-intelligent-dating-agent, his odds were quite slim – and Darrel had been in a broken state of OPTIMISM for several weeks). Morny could not afford the upgrades for Darrel – Darrel had memory leak issues.

Morny probably didn't completely understand the dangers of Tamh's "Entropy-Sink-Pump-Thingy"... But did he care? What were the odds that it could be dangerous? Really? Tamh felt guilty, ERGO whatever he did to counteract the evils of

free energy would, most likely, have zero or very little adverse impact. At least those were the rationalizations floating about Morny's head as he fantasized about the Beaches at ROMANCULA, and the sex ...

The best of the best of HOT-EMOX chicks hung out at ROMANCULA and despite their pasty skin and drinking problems, they usually had nice size jugs.

So, from Morny's standpoint, and you must understand this - the criterion of due diligence had been satisfied.

The CASINO was an AMAZING system for wealth destruction.

The CASINO was designed based on an essay written by Paul Krugman (Earth Thinkerer) in 2025.

In Krugman's famous essay, titled "What I learned from eating at Chipotle", he surmised that only 2 kinds of workers are really necessary to achieve long-term economic prosperity - bomber pilots and bridge builders.

Krugman believed half of all workers could spend their time "building shit", while the other half spent their days "blowing shit up" - and by this miracle, full employment is achieved.

"I dream of hard-working, virile, well-muscled and oiled, young men - building shit ... while armies of lesbian bomber pilots fly overhead ... blowing up the shit these greased-up men built ... and the magic of economics is laid bare, and utopia is at our doorstep ...", so went a famous line from Krugman's Chipotle piece.

The CASINO was built on several trillion random agents, and an integrated CRAY-ZXY9 Quantum Super Computer, in order to produce what has been agreed to be (by statute) a perfectly

fair environment for betting and losing money.

Via mathematical adjustments, the amount of energy lost by a player could be returned via transformation into GOLD - which was then sent, using rocket boosters, in the direction of the nearest black hole.

The CASINO must end BROKE - every night. No margin, no extra.

The CASINO was designed to lose money, but that did not imply "everyone was a winner".

There were conspiracy theorists who claimed, stupidly, that the SOLAN Central Bank collected the winnings - but why? Why would anyone hold onto anything? - when everything was free.

4. *Disappearing Cassy*

Anyways, Morny was on his way - his trip to Mars and the CASINO.

That cool autumn morning on Titan, Morny had booked his flight - and he even managed to convince a "not so fugly" co-worker to go with him. His "date" for this quest was Cassy - a new hire at the Titan data center.

Traveling to Mars would involve taking the "tube".

The "tube" was an interplanetary series of space craft, not unlike the route to Noobis, in smaller elliptical orbits around the SUN - using moderate to no drive assistance. This was cheap interplanetary travel for folks of his status - over 50 convenient routes.

Taking the "tube" to Mars took about 3 weeks to a month when leaving from Titan - but Morny claimed a relative of his had died on Mars, so I.B.M. let him take his 36 months of bereavement time. "Only 36 measly months for bereavement...", I.B.M. was a bunch of cheap ass douche bags ... this was Morny's thinking.

The trip to Mars was ho-hum, but Cassy kept him company and made it not so terrible.

Cassy was 50 years old, dark hair, not fat and not skinny, pretty enough, and she smiled a lot.

Cassy didn't talk much though, but she seemed enthralled with Morny - and Morny did not understand why, and Darrel was too busted to explain ...

"Why youze going to Mars?"

"Family crap."

"Family crap? - wedding or something?"

"A funeral."

"Huh ... ok ... I like funerals", Cassy probably didn't like funerals - but Cassy liked Morny.

Darrel, who was in and out of memory-leak hell at this point, tried to tell Morny this - but segmentation faults and core dumps left Darrel messed up and jaded. The best Darrel could do was say, "Fucker ... fucker ..." - and Morny didn't know what to make of Darrel's surly conversations.

Perhaps, for Cassy's sake, it would have been better if Morny had spent money on the upgrades - and not his wealth-scheme. Darrel was saying "fucker", but he meant to say "fuck her" - which really meant "Morny, you have what you've been looking for right in front of you ... give up on this crazy ass plan ...". But all Darrel could whisper into Morny's mind was "fucker, fuck, fucker ...". So Morny placed Darrel on mute.

The "tube" served free "food" - since Tamh devices were forbidden on the ships.

A lesbolum (lesbian-muslim) blew a tube vessel up, 20 years earlier, by synthesizing a small nuclear bomb. So - no, no Tamh devices on the "tube". But that didn't imply eating the "free meals" was a good idea ...

"Free" really meant "free case of Noobian-Legionaires disease". Noobians, on bi-decade vacation, frequented the CASINO and brought their fair share of diseases with them from Noobis - most of these noobian illnesses were fungal, and tended to infect the "tube" ship food supplies.

So, you just need to trust Morny - don't eat the fucking

food on the "tube".

Morny brought a super pack of ZED-BARS he had synthesized himself and he had plenty for Cassy as well (but Cassy said she was on a diet – so she didn't eat much).

Morny also brought some hyper-crystalline-compressed-water packets – so he was set.

All Morny needed on-board one of those dusty, musty, crappy, tube-ships was a bed and a toilet. Cassy had hoped they would have a window – Morny smiled, "a window ... you think I'm Brangelina?". Brangelina was almost 400 years old at this time.

When the tube neared Mars, several shuttle craft landed on the ship (they had a window of 1 day for exchanging passengers) and would transport people to and from Mars while the Tube ship was in the vicinity of Mars space. Morny and Cassy took an early shuttle, checked-in to the CASINO, and were able to afford a small 'box' on level 3400 – in room 34232.

Their room had a nice view, and Cassy smiled when she saw it – a view of the Olympus Mons waste DE-materializer plant and waste recovery facility ... "some place to take a girl for a romantic dinner maybe?", Morny had to stick to his plan.

The CASINO lasted 100 days, every year.

The CASINO began in November and continued past LESS-MAS.

(X-Mas in the 25th century amounted to a day when people went around, beating each other up, shiv'ing each other, and stealing other people's shit)

On entrance to the CASINO, you would carry your markers

(virtual CASINO money) and ID - and on exit you left with what you had brought in. Because mobile-phones were really part of the brain they were allowed, but it was asked that folks turn them or put them on vibrate (a very uncomfortable setting).

"Markers" were encrypted memory devices which kept track of your own gambling debits and credits and were linked to the "universal randomization engine".

At the CASINO, the wealthy who were "selected" had to bet a lot of money until they lost some pre-determined minimal amount - usually 50% of their net worth.

There was a CASINO minimum bet for the super rich, there was no maximum - and it just seemed the greatest luxury to leave, penniless, for many at that stage of richness.

Fortunes, made over centuries, would be whisked away and split between the "house" and some other "lucky" (but likely much poorer) recipient. It may seem like there is no downside in a world of free energy and free stuff - but fortunes still existed, there were the rare elements needed by these Tamh devices and the control of that was the only valuable thing left - Pison-765.

Arguably, almost over night, the NOOBIANS became the richest folk in our dim corner of the universe. They were so rich, it was impossible to calculate - because of Pison-765.

Several old oil companies that went into the Helium-3 mining business in the 21st century actually tried to use the same accounting logic they had used for OIL and HELIUM-3 for Pison-765. Problem was, the estimates translated to levels of wealth never conceived of or even feasible. While

it is true that these elements were critical, no one knew, at that time, how long they lasted - if the effects wore off and if more of the material would be needed. Investors and businessmen soon learned that Pison-765 replenishment was necessary, and many of the old oil companies went into the "printer cartridge" business.

At first the Noobians were "managed" - an easy thing to do with settlers more than 20 light years from Earth. But, eventually, they understood their power and the SOLAN System declared the LAW of ACTION which declared that everyone had "a right" to some kind of job ... if ONLY for 9 hours a week.

They also abolished all trading in these special elements - and prices were fixed (along with supply).

On one level, the CASINO was a way to periodically 'bleed' the noobs of their cash.

It all made sense, at least it seemed to.

The SOLAN Technocrats were hoping that by "making things less efficient" the economic system would require more work and thereby more "activity" - further corollaries derived from Krugman's seminal thinking. Added benefit - the Noobians, being the richest folks in the known universe, were consistently drawn the CASINO (attending was the fashionable, and obligatory, thing to do).

Economics, in the 25th century, was only slightly more evolved than witchcraft.

Now, with the CASINO, the authorities could shift fortunes and deplete wealth - at a rate that allowed for continued growth. And, with the CASINO, they had a "fair and just" way to split losses ... a means to make some poor, and others

rich, to stir shit up.

When you consider that humans had, because of Tamh's work, everything they had ever wanted (practically speaking), then you can see the great dilemma - in such a world what is status or fortune?

Status was in having a job and potentially a few "good ideas and some stories to tell/sell". The rest was taken care of, the rest came out of a box.

At the end of the day, the only difference between rich and poor during "The Solan Great Depression", was that the poor worked 9 hours a week and the rich could work as little or as much as they wanted. This was a strange world indeed.

Morny knew he wanted to re-start his life (what little life there was left) and he knew he wanted to be rich. Maybe rich didn't mean what it once did - but it certainly seemed fun to make and lose money, so why not play the game (if only as a cheater).

These weighty thoughts were pointless to Morny ... and he needed to get to work ... and buy Cassy a nice, sexy, black dress ... something that tastefully displayed her ample bosom (black dresses would always be in style).

After checking into the hotel, and getting Cassy a dress, Morny spent time calibrating the linkage with his "weird negative causality device", the REMOVIX, readying it for "non-happening" mode.

The device was still at his family's bunker, about 200 miles away.

His Q-Tooth was locked-in, and he had calibrated his implants to emit "causality distortions" anywhere he wanted

within his field of vision.

"When we going to the funeral Morny?", Cassy, looking kind of sexy in that dress, could not deter Morny from his obsession – but Morny did take notice, Darrel was a little relieved.

"The funeral has been canceled."

"How's that?"

"The funeral ... it's not happening."

"Geez, we going back then?", Cassy spoke as if she were stupid – she was actually 23.5% more intelligent than Morny. But women in the future, as in all times, understood that men had very fragile egos – so it was common practice for women to speak like Betty Boop and to avoid serious topics.

"Nah ... why waste a trip? Would you want to go to the CASINO with me?"

Cassy's eyes lit up – "THE CASINO, DAMN-YES!"

Damn yes indeed ...

Cassy had always wanted to go to the CASINO, she went on the trip with Morny in part because of her crush ... and also because of the CASINO atmosphere of Mars during the 100 days of Martian potlach.

"Ok, well ... we have to leave now ... my CASINO pass is only good for one day."

12K in dollar-ooze bought a player one day at the CASINO – it seems like too little time, but the CASINO has many games of chance, with many varied ratios of pay-off, all controlled by the super-mega-randomizing CRAY-ZXY9. Morny

had heard stories, of folks just like him, arriving on Mars – poor one day, super-rich the next. Why not him?

Morny and Cassy stood together on the translavator – an elevator that went in all directions.

The ride to the CASINO floor took 15 minutes, and Cassy, not knowing any better, held Morny's hand ... and all Darrel could eke out into Morny's field of vision was "fucker ... fucker".

"Shut up Darrel, you're the fucker now!", Darrel was crestfallen.

Morny started at the blackjack tables, and his luck improved mightily after he got the hang of using his little REMOVIX device.

After an hour or two playing cards, Morny moved on to roulette – since the pay-offs were so hugely fucking awesome!

Morny played roulette all day long, and as he won with ease he also learned to lose – lose randomly, amounts that made it seem as if his "luck" was just luck. Morny adjusted the device to fluctuate wins and losses using a Fuzzified-Fibonacci function (or f3) to create pseudo random pay off sequences ... and shit.

The CASINO, though it was impossible to cheat by statute, was constantly looking for cheaters – and never finding any.

The CASINO used cheater-detection algorithms that had access to a player's "net winnings" – and as Morny's fortunes improved, the detection system began to raise alarms.

At first, the CRAY-ZXY9 compensated for Morny's "good luck" by adjusting outcomes – but the impact of this effected other players as well. Morny was no dope – his algorithms made adjustments in kind. Eventually, Morny's bacteriological-impants and the REMOVIX device were in a tug-o-war of monumental computational scope ... and Morny was winning!

By BLUNCH-TIME (breakfast + lunch), Morny was the biggest winner in the CASINO's history, perhaps in all of gambling history – he had amassed enough money to buy I.B.M. (and fire his asshole bosses and co-workers ... if that were legal ... and it wasn't).

But, while Morny was eating – he noticed something odd ...
Cassy was fading ...

Not getting tired, as fading means in other contexts, but in the very literal sense – Cassy looked foggy, shimmering, and subdued. Cassy would talk, but Morny heard each word as a whisper, faintly ... as if from a distance.

Cassy even tried to kiss Morny, and Morny didn't even notice – though in Morny's defense, Cassy was DE-materializing and neither Cassy nor Morny fully understood this ... Darrel, Morny's A.I. helper, knew what was up – but all Darrel could utter, from inside Morny's thick skull, was "fucker ... shit ... fuck ... fucker". Morny ignored all of this crap from Darrel.

Morny played for another 2 hours after BLUNCH, and Cassy followed – like a ghost, barely noticed.

At 6 PM, Mars time, the CASINO invited Morny to the "winners circle" – they wanted to stop him playing, and Morny had more than enough cash ... so, whatever, he stopped.

Cassy, who was now no more than 1/3000th her previous mass, was simply drifting away – and both her physical presence, and her causal impacts, were disappearing as well.

Morny had his night of bacchanalian celebration – on the CASINO's dime – and then he grabbed a private “fast” shuttle to ROMANCULA.

Morny intended to buy one of those condos on ROMANCULA – the ones that had a view of Lake Emperor, the largest fresh-water lake in the solar system (containing giant mutant squid).

As Morny boarded the fast shuttle, the extremely sexy human-hybrid asked him:

“Sir, are you traveling alone?”

Morny did pause, almost startled ...

For a moment, for a tiny second, Morny had an idea of “someone else”, a tinge in his spine – “a memory of someone wearing a black dress or something”, then nothing.

Perhaps this was the lesson, and it was an impossible one to learn – because no one would ever remember.

Cassy had ceased to exist ...

Cassy wasn't even a memory – the Tamh REMOVIX re-balanced likelihoods and stole “causality” from wherever it could, in the most optimal way possible. Cassy was a “rounding error” from the perspective of this REMOVIX A.I. device, and even Darrel – the broken, built-in, annoying A.I. – had forgotten.

No evidence of Cassy remained.

Not even Cassy's parents knew she was gone – because Cassy

never existed.

No crime was committed, no murder - "habeas corpus".

And in Morny's defense, he didn't know what would happen - he simply wanted to be a "winner".

Was this the universal epoch?

Was this how the universe would be destroyed?

Billions of Morny's looking for free blunch?

Thoughts too large for Morny on this day ...

Morny didn't know, didn't care - he was going to ROMANCULA!

THE END