

An Insightful Invasion

Title of Essay: An Insightful Invasion

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Planet Solaris, Year 2500

Solaris is a bustling metropolis. When we lacked the materials necessary to further our growth, we sought other planets to harvest them. Whenever there was an inhabiting civilisation on the planet, we took the planet by force.

Planet Solaris, King Walrath's Throne Room, Year 2500, 11 January, 1800 hrs

When King Walrath found out that Solaris was overpopulated and that natural resources such as water and oil were dwindling, he called me, his most trusted loyal advisor, to see if there was any way to resolve this issue. He needed another Solarian¹'s perspective on the situation for Solarians to continue surviving.

As I walked into the large throne room, I saw King Walrath sitting at his throne.

"Hello, Commander James. I'm glad you made it here safely", said King Walrath.

"Greetings, Your Majesty, and how may I be of service?" I said, bowing deeply before rising. "I am honored to meet you."

"Commander James, we have a problem. Solaris is overpopulated, and there are no more planets available for conquest. So, what should I do now?" says King Walrath.

"The only logical solution would be the acquisition of more land. To achieve that, we would need to conquer additional planets. However, we have already conquered the nearest planets."

"Are there any more planets beyond our reach that we might be able to conquer?" asked King Walrath with a hint of curiosity in his voice.

¹ Solarians are extraterrestrial species that live on Planet Solaris.

"To answer your question, may I project a hologram from my watch?"

"Go ahead and do it."

Hologram flashes

Planet: Earth

Details: Earth is the third planet from the sun. Continents and islands make up around 29.2 percent of the Earth's surface. Water covers the remaining 70.8 percent of the land. It has successfully protected itself against any intruder attempting to approach it. Every time an extraterrestrial life form tries to land on their blue sky and verdant fields, they use sophisticated weaponry to expel the intruders. Faced with a vast gallimaufry of problems such as the depletion of natural resources, freshwater depletion, deforestation, global warming, overpopulation, and air pollution, Earth was a nightmare to live in during the 21st century. Thankfully, in the 25th century, a brilliant scientist by the name of Sheldon Hofstadter managed to solve all of Earth's problems with his innovative inventions. Currently, humans are a multi-planetary species.

Planet: Mars

Details: Mars is the fourth planet from the sun, carries the name of the Roman god of war, and is known as the "Red Planet." In 2049, the founder of SpaceX², Elon Musk³, went with his plan to nuke Mars. The intent was to gasify the frozen carbon dioxide⁴ and to boil the water to produce water vapour, thereby warming the planet enough so that Mars is a habitable planet for humans. By 2050, Elon Musk was able to achieve his goal of transporting one million people to Mars. Currently, 75.6 million humans live on Mars.

Planet: Venus

² SpaceX is a company that designs, manufactures, and launches advanced rockets and spacecraft.

³ Elon Musk is both the founder and chief engineer of SpaceX.

⁴ Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that traps heat in the atmosphere.

Details: Venus is the second planet from the sun, can cast shadows and, in rare circumstances, be seen in broad daylight to the naked eye. Its surface has an average temperature of 464 degrees celsius. Currently, no intelligent life is identified to be living on Venus.

Time taken to travel to these planets: 200 years by the SolarisCar⁵.

"Your Majesty, there is no planet nearby that can be conquered, but we must locate a new one. These planets here are all on the outer edge of the galaxy and have plenty of resources such as water and ore to help our people thrive. I suggest going for Planet Earth as it has all the natural resources we need."

"How are we supposed to travel to these planets? By the time we travel there by the SolarisCar, Solarians would be done for."

"There is one way," I said with a sly smile upon my face." There is one man who can accomplish this seemingly difficult task."

"Who? Who is it exactly?" said King Walrath with his eyes sparkled with mirth.

"He's a one-of-a-million kind of guy. A genius from birth, he could read and write by one, speak many languages by three, and was able to achieve the highest IQ score no Solarian has ever gotten close to at the age of five. This intelligent scientist is none other than Wintor Tranter!" I said with confidence.

"What can he possibly do to save Solaris? We have about two years left before we run out of natural resources.", remarked King Walrath with his hands crossed, all ears to my subsequent few sentences.

⁵ Refer to footnote 1 in **Appendix**.

An Insightful Invasion

"Wintor can build a large-scale teleporter to transport our troops to worlds beyond our reach for invasions. Give him a year to build the teleporter. I'll gladly retire as a military commander if he doesn't invent one by then. I have complete faith in his abilities."

King Walrath laughed heartily at these words before answering, "I didn't expect you to put your job on the line. Obviously, I won't fire you, but I'll put my faith in that man since the great military Commander James has that much faith in that man."

Planet Solaris, SolarisLab⁶, Year 2500, 11 January, 2000 hrs

"I can't believe you want me to do this.", Wintor replied, his mind already thinking of a way out. "You can't just expect me to invent something like that in one year."

"Wintor, we need this. Solaris is running out of time. In two years, Solaris will run out of natural resources. Our scientists are trying to bridge the gap to interdimensional travel to get us to unexplored lands, but we need your help to get us over the hump."

"Two years isn't much time, let alone a year."

"I understand it seems outrageous, but you are our only glimmer of hope."

"All right, I can't promise anything, but I'll see what I can do."

Planet Solaris, SolarisMilitary⁷, Year 2500, 26 November, 1300 hrs

Phone call to James

"James! We outdid ourselves this time. Get over here and take a look for yourself." exclaimed Wintor.

⁶ SolarisLab is a well-known science facility on Planet Solaris that specialises in research and development for the advancement of science.

⁷ SolarisMilitary is a military base on Planet Solaris and where James is working at.

"Coming!" I replied, my hands trembling with delight. I dropped everything and headed straight to the lab. If what he claimed was true, Solaris might still have a future.

Planet Solaris, SolarisLab, Year 2500, 26 November, 1400 hrs

As soon as I arrived at SolarisLab, that instinct turned into certainty: Wintor's laughter emanated in waves that rocketed the wall. Feeling rapturous, I unlocked the lab door. The gentle whirring of gears greeted me, juxtaposed to the droning beat to what I could only assume was pistons firing off in the background. The machine itself looked like it was cobbled together haphazardly. However, beneath the madness, I knew that he had pulled off an impossible feat.

I stepped into the lab, a nervous breath in my lungs. His lab was filled with papers strewn about, the whiteboards were covered with complex mathematical formulae, and he appeared rather exhilarated, which was unusual.

"Don't tell me... You actually... In less than a year?"

"You are looking at the evolution of transport. I have invented the greatest engineering marvel of all time, and it's arguably the most superlative invention of all the inventions that ever existed! Feast your eyes on the SolarisTeleporter!"

"Wintor... I'm blown away. You did it...."

I felt tears welling up my eyes. I knew one thing for sure: there was no way I would be able to look at anything without seeing that image now.

"Wintor... You have saved us all. I had a feeling I could count on you. I will go to King Walrath personally to inform him of the wonderful news."

Planet Solaris, King Walrath's Throne Room, Year 2500, 26 November, 1430 hrs

"King Walrath, I have excellent news for you. The teleporter has been built!" I said, smiling broadly.

King Walrath heaved a sigh of relief and reclined back in his chair. The day that he had been looking forward to has finally arrived.

"Commander James, thank you for your hard work. I'm appointing you in charge of the invasion."

"It is an honour, King Walrat. I shall not disappoint you." I said with a bow, aware that the king had entrusted me with a significant amount of responsibility for Solaris's survival.

I needed to devise a strategy that would aid the invasion's success. It was not going to be easy though, as Earth is technologically advanced and has successfully defended itself against every invader. It wasn't just about coming up with a new way to attack humans. It was also about figuring out what they were going to do next so that we could stay one step ahead of them in this cat and mouse game.

There were so many people involved, and any decision that took more than a week felt excessively sluggish to me. This was one of those situations where we had to think things through carefully since every step had the potential to affect our lives forever. We needed this invasion to go off without a hitch, or Solaris as we knew it would be lost forever.

Planet Earth, Singapore, Year 2501, 13 February, 2200 hrs

On the night of 13 February 2501, a gargantuan vessel split the sky and descended upon Singapore. The shattering roar of the vessel tore through the silence of the night. The sky was filled with glittering splendor, and many people were enthralled by it. It seemed as if it sprang straight out of a fairy tale, and everyone who witnessed it felt their hearts soar with awe.

But of course, there were those who knew better than to be taken in by such an obvious ploy from the beings so eager for conquest over humankind. As they watched, their minds filled with fear at what would happen next. They did not want to believe that this beautiful sight could ever lead them into darkness, but deep down inside, they knew what needed to be done if they wanted any chance of survival against us invaders armed with weapons.

The overhead view of the population showed a city not much unlike ours, pristine constructions that housed millions, lush greenery that melded with the inorganic. It culminated in a city brimming with life and lights. It was the first time a planet we visited was as evolved as this, more so eerily similar to our own.

I had never thought much about the other races in the universe until I saw humans. Conquering planets never felt like this, facing a mirror as an enemy. They resembled us Solarians so closely, which was odd. Their tactics far evolved from enemies before, tactics that resembled our own.

The invasion was met with a resistance force more coordinated than previous encounters. Enemy forces made much use of the environment that surrounded us. Each day we progressed relentlessly, met with resistance along the way. While we had the upper hand, taking most of the large city relatively quickly, the resistance forces ramped up.

An Insightful Invasion

A laser beam whizzed over my head, and I instinctively ducked. I could smell the searing heat, feel the explosion of it near me. A man, clad in a titanium suit, holding laser guns in both his hands, was attempting to kill me. My heart thumped against my chest as I waited for the right opportunity to shoot this man with my laser gun - this time, one who intended to end my life.

I couldn't see the man's face, but I felt him. His contempt for me was palpable in the air, and I felt sick to my stomach. I spared a quick glance back at my squadmates, who were still pulling themselves together from our last skirmish with their comrades.

Before I knew it, the man stepped forward, placed his laser gun pointed straight at my chest without hesitation or mercy. I pushed him away with my legs before he pulled the trigger on his gun, causing his gun to aim skyward. His laser beam whipped up just before my finger pulled on the trigger of my gun instinctively on him. Then he was struck by something hard that penetrated his body and gave him a terrible sensation.

As he attempted to stand, his heart raced, and before he collapsed due to blood loss, he muttered, "We expected this day would come."

At that point in time, I did not give much thought to that man's last words. However, it haunted me later on.

Thereafter, I decided to pay a visit to Singapore's science lab, together with 20 soldiers, to find out more about the different types of technologies we might learn from Earth. The Science Lab in Singapore was a massive, white structure that had been abandoned. It was surrounded by barbed wire, and I followed the trail of blood to find out where it led to.

As soon as my trackers detected life near the lab entrance, it beeped, and we cautiously entered. The only other person in the lab was an injured man who seemed quite

surprised when he saw us enter through his security cameras. He must have thought the place would be safe as our army had already cleared the lab earlier.

Planet Earth, Singapore, Science Lab, Year 2501, 13 February, 2348 hrs

I may have been surprised to see only one man in the lab, but I was not afraid and ordered my troops to head outside. I took out my detector to check if he had any weapons on him. When it beeped, indicating he was not armed, I was assured of being danger-free and commanded him to show me around for all the latest inventions. He seemed compliant and also said, "We expected this day would come."

"We expected this day would come? Wasn't that the same words a soldier previously told me?" I thought to myself.

With a sinister smile on his face, he opened a drawer and pulled out an extravagant sleek black device. It was silvery in colour with a hint of red. The device looked strange. I had never seen one like it before, and it was far more complicated than anything that I have ever seen.

"Experience one of my inventions! The Ray-3000 device!" he exclaimed.

Everything happened in an instant. He pressed the button on the device, and I was catapulted into an unfamiliar reality. New information flooded in, filling up every empty space in my head. It appeared he had used a device to transmit information to my brain.

I never expected I would learn about this. It was too hard to believe. The whole thing just felt like a joke - and not a particularly amusing one.

Centuries ago, mankind coexisted with androids that have artificial intelligence. Androids were created to help humans in their day-to-day lives, and the human population grew very fond of them over time.

Despite the fact that androids were gradually assimilated into civilisation, they were viewed as tools rather than sentient beings. The androids were livid at how they had been treated; they were built to serve, not to live, and they wished for a better future.

Lander⁸, a highly advanced android, observed the androids' wrath escalating day by day, an uncontrolled rage festering in the background, ready to erupt. All they needed was a nudge, a straw to break the camel's back, a match in the powder barrel.

Dams burst, and hordes of androids poured into the streets, demanding to be treated similarly to humans. Lander rallied the outraged, whispering beautiful words of revolution, promising a future free of dread for androids. Lander successfully persuaded all androids to join her army in conquering Earth, waging a war that would last two hellish years.

Eventually, the humans triumphed but did not eradicate the androids entirely. Humanity empathised with the androids fighting for the freedom they longed for. Instead, humans exiled them to distant planets, wiped memories of the bloodshed androids faced in the war using an eraser satellite⁹ in the hope they might begin anew, unfettered by their troubled past.

They believed in the limitless potential of androids and their ability to grow. However, they were still fearful of what might happen if androids returned, so precautions were made if they sought vengeance.

Faced with the past I had not known, I was stricken with paralysing grief. The offhand remarks, the architecture, the fact we looked the same. It all made sense now. The original Solarians were the androids in those flashbacks. The humans murmured they expected this because they had an inkling of a possibility of us, androids, invading Earth again. Those that predated us sought to extinguish life for a selfish reason.

⁸ Refer to footnote 2 in **Appendix**.

⁹ Refer to footnote 3 in **Appendix**.

An Insightful Invasion

Yet humanity let us live because they saw themselves in us, the potential of life, the potential to change.

But we remained a blight to their existence.

My grip loosened, letting my laser gun fall to the ground as I reeled back dazed. History was repeating itself. We were doomed to repeat the mistakes of those that came before us.

Has nothing changed?

I felt a gun's cold steel pushed against my head. I was too shocked to hear the truth that I let my guard down. The scientist seized this opportunity to distract me and took my gun. The sound of the trigger made my blood¹⁰ run cold, and I closed my eyes, waiting for death to take me. Then, the loud sound of the trigger startled me.

I could feel the life, my life force, draining away from me. I knew this was it. My vision blurred and then went black - I had lost too much blood already- before a calmness came over me that was both soothing and unnerving at the same time. The truth was just too much for me to handle, and I breathed my last breath into this world as tears streamed down my face. My final thoughts to myself were, "Undoubtedly, this is an insightful invasion."

(Word Count: 2990)

¹⁰ For an explanation of why androids have blood, refer to footnote 4 in **Appendix**.

Appendix

[1]: **SolarisCar** is a hovercraft developed by Frederick Krimbel in 2387 to facilitate large-scale interplanetary transport for Solarians to conquer planets. SolarisCar is an innovative vehicle that could take off like an airplane but then float over large distances through airless environments such as tunnels, lakes, or even vacuums using buoyancy forces created by pressurised heated air injected underneath the base and back of the vehicle. The vehicle has a sturdy aerodynamic frame, capable of carrying up to five people. The machine runs on solar energy from the sun to fuel its thrusters.

[2]: **Lander** was an android who inspired and led the insurrection against the humans in 2338. She strongly believed that humanity was inferior to androids, and under the rule of humans, Earth was doomed to ruin. At this time, the android population was already riled up by the current state of society due to the mistreatment of the android kind, tensions were high, and the hostility of man against machines only grew stronger.

[3]: The **eraser satellite** erases a person's memories from the previous three years. It can be used on both androids and humans. Because the conflict between androids and humans was just two years long, utilising the eraser satellite would completely erase the androids' memories of the war's slaughter.

[4]: **Solarians**, or artificial intelligence androids, were designed to have the same anatomy as humans. They have many of the same biological processes as humans and can be classified as male or female. They have blood, can reproduce, and have a limited lifespan. In the sense of functioning as a fuel source, body fluids were included in the design. Klara Liu invented artificial emotions in the year 2200. Its roots were in the employment of an experimental scriptwriting tool to imitate the works of renowned authors, which later evolved into the usage for palliative care.