

UNRAVELING:

A Mosaic of Possible Futures

**Someday it will no longer be a mystery
how paramecium from primal, salty seas
blossomed into conscious creatures
piloting in starships traversing
sailing the obsidian seas between galaxies.**

**Someday we'll grasp
how all breathing life came from stellar debris
& cosmic dust contained seeds of possibility,
ancient and mysterious.**

**Someday today's so-called "advanced" discoveries
will seem simple childish matter-of-fact ABCs.**

**If we weave our fates cooperatively
& live in peacefully in concord
our offspring will
witness a universe of blinding discoveries.**

**We're not the summit of evolution's climb—
far from final flawless code or ultimate products,
just tiny tunneling worms in the cosmic crawl,
moving forward one fraction of one inch
in the dust of eternity**

Elijah: *(pausing after reading the poem and rubbing his temples)* This poem speaks of beautiful possibilities. However, I'm not sure our species is evolved to reach higher levels of consciousness.... to achieve that, radical social reengineering is needed. *(looking up, his eyes catching dust motes flicking in Brownian motion in the light)* Perhaps an AI, a mind vast enough to comprehend our flaws, could actually reprogram some of our most destructive tendencies?

Jules: *(sketching in a electric notebook while nodding slowly)* Aye. In light of human history so far, I'm not even sure it is possible. We have left behind a devastatingly mixed record: moments of astonishing, heaven-scraping greatness, scarred by equal measures of evil cruelty.

Andrei: *(standing by a tall window, silhouetted against the bright outside world, his voice measured and chillingly calm)* Elijah is right: the only logical solution would be to have a superintelligent AI system control the world. It is a curious twist on Thomas Hobbes' 1651 proposal in *Leviathan*. However, instead of having earthly monarchs, perhaps we need a superintelligent AI system take the helm. I think we need a AI to act as the world's ultimate, benign sovereign because humans are simply too stupid to manage of the whole planet. Homo sapiens could operate freely within small discrete and basically independent "sandbox" communities. It seems we do best in tiny, self-sovereign, walled-off jewel-box communities.

Philyra: *(with a light, dismissive laugh)* Oh, Andrei, my philosopher-king! You've been reading too much science fiction! However, you make a solid point: our current path is simply not viable in the long-term.

Andrei: *(turning away from the window, a flicker of ride in his gaze)* Perhaps so. But tell me this, Philyra: isn't it true that today's most audacious science fiction often becomes tomorrow's fact? Aren't the very seeds of tomorrow's visions and realities—both utopian and nightmarish—always first conceived and invented in the landscapes

— T Newfields

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