

Genesis Pointe

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The ship slowed its descent to a gentle float. Downward. Like riding a cloud on a cushion of air as it brought them closer to the ball of blue and green and white. To the chosen, the sight produced a most blissful feeling. This would be right. Where others have failed, this would be right.

The chosen. The damned. Regardless, a chance to begin again. A new world for them to shape out of what had been given. Utopia would be in their hands. It would be easy. Just follow a few simple rules to show that they are worthy of redemption. For those who are, a return to forever would be granted.

The beacon calls forth, pulling them to their destiny. Soon, they would be delivered to the land for which they had been chosen.

“Really, it’s not such a far-fetched idea, is it?” the professor proposed to his class. “For all the explanations that man has come up with for his beginnings, none come with any more hard evidence than this one.”

“Are you saying that you don’t believe in evolution?” someone proposed.

“No. I’m not saying that at all” he was quick to clarify. “Evolution isn’t without merit, but this could explain some of the holes in that theory, at least when it comes to man. Of course, it puts a new spin on the whole missing link debate. There wouldn’t be a missing link. Just a brand new interjection into the world’s biological pool.”

“For those of us who put faith in more biblical explanations, it would be nothing more than a slam to the Adam and Eve story” someone else interjects.

“That’s not exactly true either. Under this theory, Adam and Eve might not be a total myth. They just may have been placed here under different circumstances. Remember that Genesis was not the first book of the Bible to be written. It was one of the last, and merely mortal man’s attempt at an explanation.”

The professor scanned his class for their reaction. There was a coed with short brown hair sitting in third row toward the middle of the class. He thought she appeared to be especially attentive today. The look on her face revealed that the topic had ignited something within her. However, he could tell that the rest of the class was not as enthusiastic with the ideology of man having roots of an alien nature. After all, considering its religious roots, you didn’t come to study at St. Thomas University without previously established

convictions. To be confronted with the idea that man was extraterrestrial would be a little unsettling to some.

The class was held in a large lecture hall and comprised over a hundred students. 'Man and Myth' was a very popular class. It satisfied a humanities requirement and didn't involve a lot of homework. Mostly, the students were just asked to come prepared to participate in discussion, and hopefully come away with some comfort within themselves for why we mortal men had been placed on this earth. Of course the why was usually expressed with biblical roots. It was the how that intrigued the guest lecturer. Professor Jack Wolfe was not the usual instructor. Alfred Donnelly had been teaching this class since its inception some twenty years ago. Unfortunately, Professor Donnelly had suffered a heart attack and was on sabbatical for the rest of the semester. Professor Wolfe was asked to sit in. It was against the dean's better judgment, but there wasn't anyone else available to take over the spot. Professor Wolfe's ideas had been known to the dean. The ideas were to be tolerated as long as they didn't cross into the classroom. Too bad Jack Wolfe got a little carried away today. And unfortunately for the professor, he didn't notice Dean Faraday sitting in at the back of the class.

When the lecture was over, the dean waited until the students left before calling out to Jack from the back of the room. "Professor Wolfe! My office! Fifteen minutes!" As the dean turned and walked out the door, he passed Angela, the attentive coed, as she came back into the lecture hall. Jack was collecting his papers, quickly stuffing them in his briefcase as she approached.

"Professor, I'd like to talk to you about your lecture today."

Abruptly, without looking up, his movement momentarily ceased. His heart was still racing from the sound of Dean Faraday's voice. He was so shaken by the dean's appearance that Jack didn't notice Angela approach him. He continued to collect his things, then he raised up and caught her gaze. For a brief moment, their eyes locked and he could see intensity within them. At any other time, he would welcome this moment. "Yes, Angela. I appreciate your interest. But the timing is quite unfortunate. If I'm still your professor tomorrow, maybe then." With the movements of a nervous schoolboy, he quickly looked away, grabbed his briefcase and started the long walk to the exit at the back of the room.

"Good luck, Professor" she called after him in a soft voice. She half hoped he would hear and find comfort, but she knew her presence was barely recognized at the moment.

Dean Faraday was not an open-minded individual. Jack knew better. He had been warned before on where expressing his belief in man's origins would be tolerated. He was learning the hard way that it's important to not only choose your audience, but where to

place the soap box. He knew that mixing unsanctioned ideas in the established curriculum was expressly forbidden at St. Thomas University. But it was a little late now. The dean placed Jack on temporary suspension. It was his strong religious convictions and unwavering belief in the old tried and true which did not allow him to consider Jack's podium an appropriate vehicle for disseminating such blasphemy in the name of education. The dean told Jack that he had heard certain areas of New Mexico have a propensity for that sort of thing, or perhaps he could get a position as a consultant for the National Inquirer. As far as he was concerned, Jack Wolfe did not fit the profile for the staff at the university. However, being a fair man, he has arranged for the board to decide Professor Wolfe's fate for the long term. The board meets this afternoon.

Jack was in his upper thirties. His attire consisted of black wire-rimmed glasses and clothes that are at least ten years out of style. He has a tall athletic shape and at least some coeds found him attractive. At least that was the feeling he got from the look on the cute girl with short brunette hair in the third row. Nevertheless, he lived the life of a socially stunted academic loner.

As he sat near the window in his apartment, a beautiful, warm spring day unfolded, but he doesn't see the sunshine for the dark cloud that hangs over his thoughts. One elbow was on the desk top, hand on the side of his face holding up his drooping head. The other hand slowly doodled on the paper in front of him. Crude drawings of little men. Some with big oval heads and huge dark eyes. Others taking a less deviant form - somewhat normal features, but with antennae. He started to drift and became lost in a fog of unconscious thought.

And then the phone rang.

"Hello. My name is Adam Forsight. Is this Professor Wolfe?"

"Yes. Well, for the professor part, it's questionable at this point."

"I'm sorry to hear about your recent problems at the university, but I believe we can help each other." There is a hint of desperation in his voice, but otherwise, the man sounds sincere.

"You heard of my suspension, already? Do you work for the dean?"

"No, Professor. Someone in your class told me what happened today."

Great, Jack thought. It's always the bad news that travels that fast. "What is it you want, Mr. Forsight?"

"I have some proof that will lead you to the discovery of your dreams."

“I see.” Just what he needs. Another prankster “Thanks for calling--“he said, starting to pull the phone from his hear.

“Wait! Please, Professor, don’t hang up. I assure you I am not a crackpot, and this is no joke. I know you to be a very intelligent man, and while I am aware of the reluctance of others to embrace your views, I share them. Well, not exactly share. You see, you believe in an idea, a theory. What I can show you is not based on theory, but is very much a reality.”

“Just who are you Mr. Foresight, and how did you get my number?”

“Let’s just say that your reputation is well known by the people with whom I associate. What I need to discuss with you should be done in person. Would you be willing to meet me?”

Jack pauses for a moment to think. Who is this guy? It wouldn’t be beyond some of his so called friends to pull a prank, rubbing salt into the wound. “Gee, I don’t know. A complete stranger calls, most conveniently while I await my fate, and I’m supposed to put trust in him, just like that.”

“I appreciate your apprehension Professor. And I apologize for the timing, but events are taking place that have escalated my urgency. For your safety, as well as mine, I ask that we meet in a public place, near my apartment. Once I have earned your trust, there is something I must show someone, and I believe that person to be you.”

“If you have something to show me, why can’t you just bring it with you?”

“It’s in a safe place, and it needs to remain safe. I don’t dare bring it out in the open.”

“So, just what do you have in mind?”

“There is an apartment building at forty-second and Chalmers. Across the street is Ashby Park. Do you know the place?”

“Yes, I know where it is. When do you want to meet?”

“The sooner the better, Professor. There are those who are on to my intentions. How is four o’clock today?”

“Today?” Jack said, stunned and caught of guard. And perhaps a little afraid. He was a little dubious of his new ally, but frankly, he could use an ally. But as far as he could tell, the man sounded sincere. Even though Jack may be a bit skeptical, he was getting a little excited at the prospects. “Sure, I guess so.” He told himself ‘what was there to loose, except more of my self-respect’. “What do you look like? What will you be wearing?”

“Don’t worry Professor. I’ll find you.” And the stranger hung up.

The two men were wearing dark clothing with hooded sweatshirts. They moved up the creaky steps to the second floor of the apartment building where Adam Forsight lived. It was the middle of the afternoon and hardly anyone was around. That was what the two men had counted on, having staked out the building these last few days, waiting for the opportune time.

They listened at Adam's door, certain he was home. They also knew this was the time he reserved for listening to music, comfortably sitting in his recliner. It was a good time since most people were away at work. Usually, only Mrs. Higbie was at home. At eighty-five, she still had ears like a hawk, but said she didn't mind the music in the least. She actually looked forward to it. The two men could care less what he was listening to as long as it distracted Adam enough for them to conduct their business. They glanced around quickly one more time, pried the door open, and disappeared as they closed it behind them. To bad they didn't see Mrs. Higbie watching from the crack in her not quite closed door.

It was hard to hear over the music, but the apartment was searched from top to bottom. Every drawer emptied, every cushion ripped open and every book shook out and thrown to the floor.

As if wanting to shout, but fighting to keep his voice down, one of the men frantically screeched "Nothing! Shit! And we've looked everywhere!"

"It's got to be here somewhere" returned the other. "Certainly, he wouldn't let it out of his sight."

"Maybe" said the first man, analyzing the situation. "And maybe not. He has been acting a bit different lately. Maybe he knew we were on to him."

The music stopped. Suddenly, silence filled the apartment.

The men froze. Without a word, their look told each other that remaining would be dangerous. "We'll have to find another way. Let's go."

They crept to the door and listened. Not a sound. They slowly opened the door and peered out. No one seemed to be around, and they walked out casually, descended the stairs and left the building.

After having waited a few minutes to be sure the men would not return, Mrs. Higbie went to Adam's door and knocked. The door opened slightly with her touch. "Mr. Forsight? It's Mildred from down the hall." He doesn't answer. "Mr. Forsight?" she calls again opening the door a little more. It was then that she saw the apartment in total disarray. Adam was slumped in his easy chair. She cautiously moved closer. "Mr. Forsight? Are you OK?" Now that she was upon him, she shook his shoulder. "Mr. Forsight?" She tried one more time as she shook more vigorous. "Oh, God!" she exclaimed, for it was obvious that

the two men were not his invited guests. She had allowed two murderers to leave the building, never having seen their faces.

Jack was quite anxious now. It was a half hour before he was supposed to meet his mysterious friend, but he felt that he needed to get out of the apartment. If he didn't, he would drive himself crazy thinking about what awaited him. A million thoughts had already crossed his mind since the stranger had called. *Who was this guy? What could he possibly have to show him? Does he have an alien in his freezer? Or is he a serial killer? Perhaps he's just an enterprising Jehovah's Witness with an inventive ploy of entrapment? He had dealt with zealots. It would be just like them to grab him while vulnerable.* Whatever the case, Jack was in a frame of mind willing to take a chance.

It only took him fifteen minutes to get to the park. After parking his VW bug, Jack selected a bench that should give him a good vantage point – one that shouldn't allow anyone to sneak up on him. Usually, this would be a good time to relax and get into a good book, but Jack was too much on edge to relax. He wanted to keep alert. Nervously, he fidgeted on the bench, looking left, looking right, occasionally turning to look behind him. There weren't too many people around, just a handful of kids and a few of their mothers who were taking advantage of the nearby playground. He didn't get the feeling he was being watched, but still, the situation kept him on edge.

Four o'clock came, but the stranger had not yet approached him. The anticipation was getting to him, so he got up and paced back and forth, from the water fountain to the bench and back again. After another ten minutes, it was beginning to look like his friend was not going to show. After having been so tense, Jack was beginning to feel a little less threatened. However, he was still not sure if he felt relieved or disappointed. He surveyed the area again, looking out to the park perimeter in all directions. When his gaze found the apartment building that Adam Forsight was supposed to live in, he noticed a bit of commotion. There was an ambulance out front. A small group of people had congregated near the entrance. There were a few police officers talking to the people who were standing there. Jack decided to go see what was going on.

When he was in front of the building, everyone, including the cops, was preoccupied with their own conversations to pay any attention to the man that just walked up. Mostly unnoticed, he entered the building. He could guess that the center of attention was upstairs, based on the roar of voices he heard from that direction. Jack climbed the stairs, pausing at the top to assess the situation. Down the hall, he saw an open apartment door, and many people were busy inside. A uniformed officer was on guard at the door. A few apartments down, a detective was talking to an elderly lady in the hall. Jack headed in that direction.

At first, he was paid no attention when he approached. Not wanting to interrupt their conversation, he continued to the busy apartment. As he passed, the detective abruptly turned to Jack and in a commanding voice said "Excuse me sir. May I help you?"

"I was looking for Adam Forsight" Jack quickly responded, the pace of his heart beat beginning to intensify.

"Your name, sir?"

With a touch of hesitation, he said "Jack Wolfe".

At the sound of his name, the old lady's eyes became bright and wide, along with the expression that filled her face. The men, who were looking at each other, didn't notice her reaction.

"And what relationship do you have to Mr. Forsight" Lt. Boyle inquired.

"Not much of one actually. We've never meet. But he called me a few hours ago, and we were supposed to meet in the park across the street, at four o'clock. When he didn't show, I noticed the crowd in front of the building and came over to see if he was here."

Lt. Boyle just looked at Jack for a moment and then told him "Yes, Mr. Wolfe. He is here, but not really up for visitors. I'm afraid he is dead."

"I see." Jack said, a little stunned, as he looked toward the busy apartment. "I take it from all the interest that it wasn't from natural causes."

"That's right. You wouldn't know anything about this, now would you Mr. Wolfe?"

"No sir. Like I said, until a few hours ago, I never heard of the man."

The detective turned to Mrs. Higbie. "Could this man be one of the two men you saw? Have you ever seen Mr. Wolfe before?"

"No sir. Never" she said, but she found it hard to maintain eye contact with him.

"Very well. That's all for now, Mrs. Higbie."

She turned and went into her apartment down the hall, but she was focused on Jack as she slowly closed her door.

"So, Mr. Wolfe, why would a man, whom you've never met, persuade you to come down here to meet him?"

"He said he had something to show me. Something that would help prove a theory."

"Are you a scientist, Mr. Wolfe?"

"No sir. I'm on the faculty at St. Thomas University. At least, I hope to remain so. As of this morning, I'm on suspension due to my belief in this theory. I have a lot at stake. I decided to take the chance and meet the man."

"And what is the nature of this theory? Would it be worth killing someone over it?"

Jack thought about it for second. “Lieutenant, there are people out there with their own agendas to meet, who might do anything to meet them, but I assure you, if it exists, I would lay my own life on the line to get proof.”

Lt. Boyle didn’t quite know what to think, but he knew there wasn’t anything that directly tied Jack to the murder. “OK, Mr. Wolfe. I don’t have any other questions for you at the moment, but I do insist that you remain available, in case we should locate any ‘proof’ during our investigation.”

Neither of them had paid any attention when Mrs. Higbie came back out of her apartment, holding a small package in her hand, and went down the stairs to the first floor. When Jack finished with the detective, he went downstairs to leave. Mrs. Higbie was waiting around the corner.

“Mr. Wolfe,” she said in a low voice while pulling him aside “I didn’t want to say anything in front of the detective. You see, a few days ago, Adam gave me a package to keep for him. He said it was kind of an insurance policy. He needed to keep it safe. But if anything should happen to him, I was to call a Jack Wolfe at the number he gave me. With all the excitement up there, I almost forgot about it. It wasn’t until I heard you give your name to the detective that I remembered.” She lifted up the package and presented it to Jack.

“Do you know what’s in it?”

“Oh, no sir. I’m not a snoop. Adam was willing to trust me with something he considered very important. And I trusted him. I just placed it in my closet and forgot about it. I figured when he wanted it, I would have it to give back to him, just like he gave it to me. But now, I guess I must give it to you.” She looked so forlorn for having lost her friend. “I hope I’m not making a mistake for not telling the police, but this package was expressly meant for you. I only hope it holds a clue to finding who did this to Adam.”

Jack took the package and left the building. As he walked to his car, he suddenly came to the realization that if Adam had been watched, if what he had was worth killing over, then it wasn’t beyond reasonable consideration that he was being watched as well. Perhaps the murderers were somewhere in the shadows, watching the building. Watching who came and left. Especially who left, with a package he didn’t come with. He decided that going straight home was probably not the best thing to do. There was a café a few blocks from his apartment that he liked to go to when he was working on lectures or otherwise wished to be alone. He liked it because there was a booth in the back that was always

available, and afforded a reasonable amount of privacy. He picked up his pace, made quick glances around him, and got into his car.

The waitress approached the booth. “Hi Professor. I brought you the usual. I assume that’s what you wanted.”

“Yes, thank you.” The usual was a large chocolate shake, with a Pepsi chaser. Caffeine overload. It kept him alert and would last him all night, but more importantly, he knew that the waitress wouldn’t be bothering him again for quite a while.

He started to open the package. It was about the size of a shoe box, wrapped in plain brown paper, neatly taped around all of the seams. He took out his pocket knife and sliced open the paper, making an X across the top. Then, it was easy to rip away the paper, exposing the box it covered. The lid removed effortlessly and the contents came into view.

Inside, there were three items. First, he picked up a folded piece of paper. He unfolded what appeared to be some sort of map. It had browned, as in with age, but otherwise showed no sign of deterioration. There was writing on it, but he did not recognize the language. He thought it resembled some old, ancient text, long since abandoned by modern man. Next, he pulled out a small, black device that had several buttons in the middle, some sort of display screen at the top, and a small speaker at the bottom. The last item was a picture of a young girl. He gasped as he realized it was the girl with the short brunette hair that sat in the third row of his class. He thought her name was Angela. As he turned the picture over, he saw the confirmation, for right there on the back of the picture was a phone number, and her name – Angela Forsight!

He had thought about Angela from time to time. But he fought acting on any impulses. He wasn’t a man who thought it would be proper to fraternize with one of his students. Especially a student considerably younger than him. Oh, but he wanted to. But now, new circumstances had come into play. Surely now he had a good reason to make the call. It was destiny calling. He owed it to Adam Forsight. Without further hesitation, he reached for the phone.

“Angela, its Professor Wolfe.”

“Oh! Hello, Professor” she said, sounding pleased to hear from him.

“Sorry for the intrusion, but I have to ask you something. Do you know an Adam Forsight?”

There was a long pause. When she had not responded, Jack spoke again. “Angela? Are you there?”

He heard her swallow as to clear her throat. "Yes. I'm here. I'm sorry, but that is a name I haven't heard in some time."

"Is he related to you?"

"Not...really. He was someone my mother was involved with. I'm not sure what it was all about, but I could tell he was hiding from something. Foresight wasn't his real name. We let him use it so we could act as a family. Then one day, a few years ago, he disappeared from our lives. Just never came back."

He could hear the sadness in her voice. It was obvious that Adam was someone special to her. There was a connection between them. He didn't know how to tell her that Adam was dead. But he knew the puzzle in the box must be played out.

"Angela, there is something I must show you."

Twenty minutes later, there was a knock on his door. "Thank you for coming, Angela. Please have a seat."

She sat across from him at the kitchen table and asked "So, how do you know Adam?"

"To be honest, I don't." Jack told her how his involvement had unfolded. Then he showed her the map.

The sight of it aroused something within her. She sat up, very attentive as she studied the document. The location of the map was not immediately apparent, but she recognized the script that was printed on it.

"The script on this map is something that Adam had taught me. He said it was an ancient language that may be important to me someday. He knew I was interested in studying anthropology when I got to college. It was just a fun thing for us to do together. I really never thought much else about it." She looked up at Jack and he could see that there was a revelation stirring within her. She said "I guess all things happen for a purpose, and now, we must follow the lead he has left us."

"A lead to what? What does it say?" he asked her with excitement and anticipation. He leaned over and looked closer with her.

"It is obvious that this map is very old. The topography is mostly non-descript. But these symbols here, above the X, are a set of numbers, separated by a comma. My guess is they are longitude and latitude coordinates."

Out of the box, Jack pulled the black device. "The buttons on this device have the same symbols." He played with the device and discovered the power switch. The screen came alive. He pressed the buttons matching the symbols of the coordinates from the map and they appeared on the screen. There was a green button. He pressed it. The device started

to emit a low hum, and a straight but moving line appeared at the bottom of the screen. But nothing else happened.

Angela went over to Jack's computer. After a few minutes, she had a map in front of them. It was in the Middle East. Very matter of factly, she said "we must take the device to this place."

Studying the screen, he asked "Does the script tell you what this place is?"

Angela turned to Jack, staring directly at him with a look of wonderment. The corners of her mouth turned up in a huge smile from the revelation. "It's the place where it began. The place where man first came to Earth. It's called Genesis Point."

There they were, racing across a desolate, deserted road in the middle of God knows where. Angela was at the wheel, driving like a woman on a mission. She looked so seductive as the wind blew swiftly through her blouse as the jeep bounced through rugged terrain. Endless sand took on an ominous glow from the setting sun. Jack held the device firmly in his hands, watching the line below the coordinates as they became more active. The speaker had begun to beep a few miles back, and the sounds were becoming quicker and stronger. If they were right, their destination was straight up ahead, just over the hill.

With the exception of the remnants of a few trees in the distance, having long since given up on another drink, the spot was just as desolate as the last twenty miles. Yet the indications on the device said this was the place. But what was it? Why were they led here, of all places?

The wind began to blow with a blinding vengeance as it filled the air with millions of tiny pieces of sand. The sky darkened in a smooth, but quick transition as the enormous, silver craft came over the horizon. The device became quite active as the beeps turned into ringing. Repeated ringing, getting louder and louder as the ship descended closer.

At last, the ringing awoke him. Startled, his elbow left the table and he jerked upright. His forehead was wet from sweat. In the next few seconds, Jack realized it was all a dream. He figured it was a sign that perhaps he had been letting his imagination get the best of him. The phone still rang.

"Hello?" he finally answered.

"Hello, Jack. It's Dean Faraday."

"Yes, Dean" he said as his mood swiftly migrated from the euphoria of the dream to dejection, ready to surrender to the consequences of his reality. "I can be in tomorrow, and clean out my desk, if you like."

“Actually, Jack, the board would like to see you stay. We can just consider this a warning if you can promise to stick to the curriculum from now on and abandon your views, at least in the class room.”

“Thank you, Dean. I have had time to, uh, think today. I don’t anticipate it being a problem any more.”

“I’m glad to hear that. We’ll see you tomorrow.”

Jack stood up as he wiped his forehead. He thought to himself ‘How long have I had these foolish notions? I’m an intelligent man. Where did they come from anyway?’ He turned and looked into his bookcase. ‘Of course. I’ve been feeding myself full of this for too long.’ He grabbed a box out of the closet and started to remove the books from the shelves.

That evening, Jack was sitting in his chair, rubbing his closed eyes, relaxing as best he could. He had begun to start feeling comfortable with himself again. He would put his past obsessions behind him, and allow his energies to take him in more productive directions. Spiritually, nothing had changed. After all, it would be hard evidence and rational scientific thought that would fuel his beliefs from then on.

The moment of introspection was abruptly interrupted when someone started knocking on the front door. He walked over and opened it. It was Angela Forsight. She opened her coat, placed her hand beneath it and pulled out a box, about the size of a shoe box, and she was holding it out to him when she said “Professor, I have something to show you.”