



UNfataally  
DEAD:  
to thaw or not to thaw?



Wayne Edmiston

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# CHAPTER 1

## The Journey Begins

**I**NSIDE the building, a mere whisper of life remained in Walter Elias Disney. His body was surrounded by cryoprotectant containers, tanks, cryostats, tubes and transfer systems, the best 1960s technology available.

The look and smell of the entire facility were sanitary down to the last detail. Safety regulations warned strict enforcement on a massive bulletin board in the entry lobby.

In a large lab beyond, the cryonics team hovered, busily making final equipment checks while the medical team carefully and efficiently monitored their patient, the sacred founder of Imagineering entertainment. Every action was critical. Everyone's awareness was at its height. Several medical professionals vigorously verified and documented every second until Disney's impending cardiac arrest.

Minutes seemed to crawl by, the waiting was so intense. Outside, the storm blustered and wailed as if it might clamor through the walls.

The facility's intentionally soothing ambient music was turned off, in deference to who was being preserved. Not a sound came from the loudspeaker system on this dreary, unsettled afternoon.

As Disney's transitional moment drew near, the teams' work escalated. Each member was determined to prevent any possible premature decomposition of the one and only original "Imagineer." Several technicians were trembling slightly, reverently muttering about the man who had brought so much joy to the entire world.

Technician Jimmy Doolittle broke the silence and exclaimed with a gasp, "Holy cow! I grew up with the Mouseketeers and the Mickey Mouse Club ... and here I am helping to launch Disney himself into the stratosphere of cryonic suspension. Wait till I tell my kids!"

Supervisor Dr. Andy Susskind, extremely tired from a long, tedious, all-night shift, tersely instructed, "On the contrary. Remember, this must be kept secret from all sources, and I mean all of them. You've sworn allegiance

to this facility and I expect you to honor the agreement you signed.” He added, resigned to the possibility, “or have you forgotten so soon?”

“You’re right,” Doolittle said, chastened. “I got caught up in the moment because of who this is. These tight lips are sealed and will open none too soon, if ever.”

“Good, see that you mean it. I guess I don’t need to remind you about our confidentiality agreements, then?”

“No, sir.”

Disney’s vital-signs monitor suddenly sounded a warning.

Susskind exclaimed, “Flat line! It is time. Once every process is complete, we’ll continuously monitor Disney’s body under the strictest security conditions and protocols. Let’s get to it!”

All hands then functioned swiftly and efficiently, as if they embodied a single unit of consciousness, each person at peak attention. Every process went as planned; the countless, necessary drills paid off: no interruptions, no missteps, and definitely no mistakes.

Only close family members—Lillian his wife, daughter Diane, and his brother Roy—gathered around Disney’s bed. Teary-eyed Roy stood at Walt’s feet. Unconsciously he sought to rub them as he had done so many times in the past, because his little brother had had chronically cold feet. In mid-reach, he stopped short and, with a huge lump in his throat, sadly muttered, “I guess you won’t be needing me to rub them any longer...” Legal representatives from Crockett, Poppins, and Hood stood at a respectful distance, ready to ensure powers smoothly transferred to the appropriate parties.

The initial flurry of medical activity subsided and, their tasks complete, the teams stepped back to make room for Disney’s family and friends to bid him farewell ... for now.

The Reverend Dr. Fenwicke Holmes, pristinely dressed, moved gently and authoritatively to the front of the gathered group and intoned, “We are here in the presence of and with the Creator. We stand witness to a future in which humankind can be free of terminal ailments. Our timeless, ageless friend has endured much pain and suffering. He is now being placed in the care of holy advanced technologies, the result of collective efforts by superior forward thinkers.”

He paused and breathed deeply before continuing, “Just a few days ago I spoke with him. He said to me: ‘Bring me back, safe, well, and of ... sound mind.’

“We now place his request into the Law of Mind, trusting it will be acted upon with the knowledge that all things are possible in the embracing arms of the God of our understanding. Together let us know this event, whose beginnings we witness today, happens in the right time, the right conditions

prevail, and the subsequent outcome is in perfect right, divine order. Amen and so it is.”

Hovering at a respectful distance, several technicians, including the standby and transport teams, stood poised and ready for the ensuing rigorous 170 hours of cryopreservation.

Dr. James Gold, CEO of the cryonics organization, gratefully acknowledged his team’s efficiency and effectiveness and continued, “All systems are a go. Begin the transfer, let’s make history.”



## CHAPTER 2

# Heaven

**A PLACE** known to all who have passed into the wild blue yonder, Heaven's Creative Department is headed up by Walt Disney himself. Pink and yellow clouds billow around his workstation. He peers intently through a special pair of goggles plugged into an Infinite Capability Viewer. He fiddles with several settings on a console and keyboard, his attention wholly focused on the view.

Angel Gabriel approaches deferentially, intending not to intrude on the creative process. He is a tall, extraordinarily distinguished-looking gentleman dressed in a long shimmering robe that pulses strobe-lights within its folds. He appears to be deeply troubled as he carefully, thoughtfully walks toward Disney; he stands nearby, still searching for words to open a conversation.

He decides, takes a deep breath, and softly touches Disney's arm. "Excuse me, Walt, an urgent matter. We must talk privately right away. Come to the main office ASAP."

As if he hasn't heard the angel, Disney murmurs, "Sure, Gabe. I'll be there soon."

Gabriel urges intensely, "Not later, Walt. We need to talk now, right now!"

Still engrossed, Disney does not respond to Gabriel's insistent tone. He is busily making large sweeps in the air with his arm, creating cartoons that magically appear then fade from view as he raptly stares into the viewer. He explains, "I'm watching this young girl ... from Livingston, California. Here, look through the viewer." He offers the goggles to Gabriel, "See her?"

Gabriel suppresses his agitation and accedes to Disney. He takes the goggles and looks with genuine interest and compassion, saying nothing.

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The viewer shows a little eight-year-old girl with deep-set worried brown eyes and a pair of perfectly braided pigtails. She is in a 1950s treatment

room—not a school principal’s office as we might have expected, but in an optometrist’s office, Dr. Musgrave from Turlock, California.

Her anxious mother asks, “Are you OK, honey?” Her daughter nods a cautious yes; she is a bit unnerved by the prospect of someone looking into her eyes to identify what is wrong with her eyesight. “It won’t be too much longer, then you can go back to where you need to.”

Trailed by a nurse, the doctor walks in, a kind smile for them both, and says to the girl, “Well, Ms. Sherry, let’s see what’s in there. Open your eyes wide.”

Her dilated eyes seemed even larger on her face, and she holds her breath in concentration. “Hold them just like that while I take a look-see.” He held up a small lens first to one eye, then the other, pausing briefly before speaking a few sentences that make no sense to anyone except the nurse taking notes. “Got it. OK, Sherry, you can relax.”

She had been remarkably patient, but the girl’s unease took over and she blurts, “Why don’t my eyes work right?”

“Say, you really are a curiosity, aren’t you? Your problem is because one eye sees one way and the other another, and one of them tilts, too.”

Little Sherry interjects, “I coulda told you that. Can you make me see better?”

The good doctor pats her on her head and turns to the mother, “Your daughter is so precocious! We have just the machine to help her. It came in last week from a special benefactor who incidentally has a little girl nearly Sherry’s age with the same problem. He looked for some specific equipment, found it and donated it to our facility, because he hopes to help others see better. With the help of the machine and special eye exercises, she will.”

Relieved and excited at the prospect, the mother exclaimed, “That is so wonderful! You must thank the benefactor from our family. We are grateful for his interest in helping not only his daughter, but others with similar eye problems. When do you want us to come back?”

Dr. Musgrave instructed the nurse over his shoulder, “Make an appointment for our special customer for next week and at two-week intervals afterward, and give her the specific eye exercises to do between visits. We’ll check her eyes every other month to assess her progress.”

“Yes, doctor.” She leaves the room with Sherry’s file in hand.

The good doctor said, “Mrs. Plaster, your little girl here has a very strong personality and knows what she wants. That’s a good thing! I’ll do my best to see she gets what she needs.”

“Thank you Dr. Musgrave. Yes, she has a decidedly strong personality, and not being able to see as others do is holding her back.”

You needn't worry about that any longer. I've had good results already. It will be like a walk in the park."

Little Ms. Sherry interrupts, "Oh goodie, I like to take walks in the park with my doggie, Penny. It's gonna be fun, I think." She hops off the chair, obviously more than ready to get going with everything. "I think I like this man, and the special benny factor. Momma, what's a benny factor?"

"Honey, a ben-eh-factor is someone who gives a valuable gift without any strings attached—not a benny factor. Benny's a comedian on Sunday nights, remember? I know how much you love it when there is a blooper on live television, right?"

"Oh yes I do. Can we go now, I'm hungry!" Little Sherry Plaster is obviously ready to leave.

At the front counter, appointments made, the mother pauses, worried that the treatments will be expensive, even though she is willing to do what is necessary for her daughter. "We don't have a lot of money on hand. May we make weekly payments? My husband is a union painter and he gets paid on Fridays, unless they go out on strike."

The nurse reassures the mom, her voice curiously melodic, "That's not necessary Mrs. Plaster. This benefactor is taking care of all the costs for anyone who needs this specialized treatment. That is his gift for one in need to see rightly."

"Oh my goodness!" Mrs. Plaster is taken aback. "Please tell him how much we appreciate his generosity. Someday, somehow, we'll be able to repay him. This is our sacred promise."

"No need, ma'am. It is his great pleasure to give this gift."

While walking out of the office, Sherry declares to her mother, "I will see better and when I do I'll do something special for him mama, I promise. I'll make him a special picture of happy flowers or something, OK?"

"Yes, that would be a nice present for the man, honey, you do that. Now, since you said you were hungry, what about a toasted cheese sandwich, celery sticks, and maybe some chocolate milk?"

Sherry's eyes dance about as she sees the favorite meal in her mind's eye, "Oh yes please!"

Later, home from school, Sherry runs eagerly to her bedroom, lifts the lid of her well-worn desk—recently donated by the school and now her very own—pulls out a blank sheet of paper and begins drawing and humming. A big grin lights her face and determination shows in her eyes.

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Walt explains to Gabriel, "She's been having a pretty rough time. She believes she's a misfit because all she wants to do is draw cartoons. See those flowers she's drawn! They have smiles on them! I did that long ago."



Gabriel nods in silent agreement. Disney presses further, “She’s been catching grief from her friends and teacher because she’s different, doesn’t fit the mold. I fear she may want to run away from home. I must find a way to influence her and show the right people her talent.” He sweeps his arms through the air and large flowers with smiles on their faces smile and wink at him, then fade.

“I understand how important that is to you,” Gabriel’s voice is strained, “but we have something more urgent to address immediately. It simply can’t wait.”

Disney is surprised. He was so intent on watching the little girl he was oblivious until this moment. The hair stands up on the back of his neck and he feels suddenly anxious.

Gabriel’s tone is insistent, “You started something before you came here. And now a decision must be made. Time is of the essence. There is no other way to handle this. It must be done, Walt. Come with me!”

Disney feels both perplexed and apprehensive as Gabriel glides away without another word and disappears into a big ornate elevator, visible across the picturesque veranda. The sign above it reads, EXECUTIVE EXPRESS.

He follows reluctantly, and waits for the GENERAL STAFF elevator, not knowing the reason for all this attention focused on him and not the little girl he was so raptly interested in. As the doors slide open, he takes a deep breath and enters. “Well, here goes nothing, I hope.”

One hand in his pocket, he presses the big green UP button and looks to the open sky. The sun is glorious and shines in splendor, warming, comforting. The elevator rises three levels and glides to a full stop. The doors automatically slide open and a melodious disembodied voice announces, “We trust you had a nice trip. Have a great day, wherever you are is perfectly perfect.”

A long hallway with many doors on either side leads to the easily identified luminous, pearlescent double doors of Heaven’s Main Office. When Disney reaches them, the doors open and slide into the wall; harp strings announce him.

Inside, brilliant white “walls” shimmer and golden accessories glint and shine. Several “ponds” dot the office, containing piles of large, highly polished diamonds and jewels that glow in varying colored hues. Crystals spin in the air and send rainbow flashes everywhere. The plush furniture appears to float without support; the legs are transparent.

We see Gabriel busily studying a large, golden book. The title identifies it as a minute-by-minute record of Walt Disney’s earthly life of 65 years and 10 days,

The Original Imagineer is exceedingly nervous and watches the angel carefully as he approaches. "This reminds me of my grammar school days. I remember feeling this scared when they called me to report to Principal Kanen's office to discuss how disappointed they were with me."

Gabriel doesn't acknowledge Walt's presence, but continues to peer into and leaf through the pages describing Disney's most intimate moments on earth. Not sure why he's here or how to react, Disney stares down and plays with cloud wisps pooling around his feet. He creates a few cartoons by moving his toes in whirling motions.

Then he looks back at the angel and softly clears his throat. "Ahem! I'm here."

No response or eye contact.

Disney studies Gabriel's face and sees an expression that is a mixture of... concern? Pity?

He sighs and says mostly to himself, "Ohhhhhh, this is gonna be a biggie..."

At last, Gabriel looks up and motions to a plush, round-backed chair floating near the cloudy floor. Walt obediently perches self-protectively on the edge of it, should flight become important.

Gabriel places the book on a massive, ornately carved crystal desk, looks intently into Walt's face and smiles warmly. "Please relax, my friend. You have done nothing wrong."

"If that's the case, why all the tension? I sense it everywhere."

"We just feel you should have some advance notice and involvement in the decision-making process. If we didn't alert you, you could be most rudely surprised." Gabriel looks back at something on the desk, ignoring Walt's discomfited squirming.

"I'm ready. Anything is better than what not knowing has been doing to my nerves. What are we talking about anyway?"

"Well, Walt, this is a first for us. Quite frankly we don't know what to do about it." Gabriel is not elaborating yet and simply waits for Disney's response.

Frustrated to the point of being rude Disney demands, "Spit it out, man! What the dickens did I do?"

Gabriel peers right into Walt's heart and soul. "Do you remember making a decision right before your death?"

Confused and surprised by the sudden inquisition, "No, I don't think I made any decisions then."

"Au contraire my friend, you did, an important one."

Walt sinks back into the legless plush chair, sighing and looking utterly forlorn, almost whispering, "I was very weak. My mind was clouded by my

illness. No. I am certain I made no decision that requires me to be figuratively ‘called on the carpet’ here. You must be mistaken.”

Gabriel leans forward, his hands braced on the desk and gazes intently at his crestfallen friend, “You made an important contract when you were on your deathbed.”

“Contract?” Disney shakes his head, “I don’t understand.”

“Do you not remember asking for cryonics researchers to explain the procedure of freezing your body until your illness was declared medically manageable?”

Disney nods with growing certainty as recognition slowly seeps in, and sits up straighter. “Yes ... it seems I might be brought back to life! Sure, now I remember that. I was so intrigued by the concept. That’s why I agreed to participate.” He recalls another place, another time...

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He’s in the cryonics firm’s main office. In his mind’s eye, he revisits the document and, after carefully reading the last page in front of his legal team and the cryonics firm, he sees his signature affixed to the page.

The ink is not the disappearing kind.

He looks at it and says with conviction, “OK, I’m ready. What’s next?”

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In a blink, he’s back in Heaven’s Main Office, no longer confused, but concerned, “Surely this is not the first you’ve heard of this. It’s been done for years.”

Gabriel sits on the crystal desk’s corner nearest Disney and spreads his arms in a gesture of helplessness. “Yes, people have been frozen before, but so far nobody under my jurisdiction has ever been revived. Should you choose to return; you would be our first. It raises innumerable questions.”

Walt stares blankly into Gabriel’s face, stunned, unnerved, and experiencing waves of emotions—from absolute excitement to total and unequivocal terror. “Are you telling me my disease has been resolved?”

“Yes ... cured, or at least manageably controlled.”

“I’m feeling overwhelmed and weak, which feels familiar. Yes, I remember, I felt it once before, the day they told me my illness was terminal and my days few. Why should I feel it in my soul now? This isn’t bad news.” He doesn’t feel reassured.

“Walt, your contract with the cryonics company orders them to thoroughly examine the possibilities for your physical revival every five years after your death. It has now been nearly half a century ... and ...”

Walt looks away, unfocused, but snaps back at the angel’s next words.

“The attempt will begin in less than 24 hours, earth time.”

Disney is agitated and asks, aghast, “How can they just do that? Don’t you have some control over this?”

“Calm down, please Walt. You have many things to consider, and very little time to reach an informed decision.”

Disney doesn’t hesitate. “Just tell me No. You have the power.”

Gabriel sits and faces him squarely. “I cannot do that. I will not supersede your original decision, and that is final.”

Disney is bordering on belligerence, “What if I don’t want to go back? I mean, there are rules: once you pass through the great gates you can’t just shoot back to earth, contract or no contract. Is this correct or not?”

Gabriel sidesteps a direct answer and explains, “Under these circumstances you aren’t bound by those rules. The contract you signed in 1966 is binding. In your own thoughts you were just there a moment ago.”

Disney is very uncomfortable and getting angry. He leaps to his feet and demands, “Binding?!? And if I don’t comply, can they sue me?”

Gabriel chooses his next words with exceeding care, “I do understand your reaction, Walt. It will be OK either way. Either way, I promise.”

Disney feels tense. “I’m accomplishing many times the amount of good for humanity from here at my soul level, much more than I did on earth,” he says, considering. “At least that’s what I can garner from my observations and enhanced capabilities through the goggles back in my department.”

Gabriel asks solemnly, “How do you know that? What might you accomplish when or if you return with the insights you enjoy now?”

Walt registers surprise. He stands straighter, then paces a few steps.

His eyes begin to dance as he reviews the possibilities. “Would I remember what I’ve been doing as head of Heaven’s Creative Department? I must admit, I do wonder what life on earth would be like now. Could I eat a candied apple and enjoy some strong, black coffee once more, maybe even a smoke or two?”

“Yes. You would be present and could enjoy the pastimes a mortal person does. However, don’t waste precious time on the sin of gluttony because you will have only a limited time to experience each year while using your own judgment, good or not. And you are no longer mortal, remember, because of your smoking.”

“I do have some time to—wait!” Struggling to understand, he asks, “What do you mean I have only a ‘limited time’? Are you telling me this return to life on earth isn’t permanent?”

Gabriel takes a deep breath before continuing, almost squirming in his glossy high-back winged chair as he gets to the crux of the matter, “Your final choice, be it a return to life or a continuation of your days in Heaven, will be permanent. I am speaking of granting you a limited preview time.”

Now obviously delighted, Disney asks, “You have an earth viewer that allows me to preview what my life will be like if they revive me? Wow! Where is it?”

“Better than that. You have been granted special dispensation to walk the earth as a flesh-and-blood mortal.”

This stuns him. “You mean ... walk on the streets, in the rain, splashing in the gutters like Gene Kelly did in ‘Singing in the Rain’? That kind of stuff? For real?”

“Yes, for real. With some stipulations, of course.”

Walt tenses with an “I knew it was too good to be true” expression on his face. He gingerly sits back down to be apprised of the remaining rules.

Gabriel stands up, walks around the desk, and delivers the specifics, “You will have up to one hour maximum per experience. The dates and timing of some of your appearances are predetermined, actual world changing events; others will stream from your own consciousness, determination, and intuition as to where, when, and why they unfold.”

“Up to one hour per experience only? What years?”

“Your first adventure is to begin a few years after your mortal death, as I understand it.”

“What’s the purpose? What can I possibly learn in a mere hour?”

“You may interact in ways that touch peoples’ soul essence. What happens then is up to that person to do what is appropriate for them. You, Walter Elias Disney, are a visionary, an emissary of sorts, not a missionary nor to be confused as one. Other than finding out what impact you may have had on various and sundry people’s lives, you are in complete control of the knowledge you gather or dismiss. We hope to counsel you to reach the right decisions, but you are the sole person in charge of the value of your preview time”—and under his breath, “mostly”—“like it or not.”

Disney is floored. “God only knows what shape my company’s in today, and I don’t want my future actions to tarnish it.”

Gabriel’s response is full of tenderness, “You’ll find out soon enough, Walt.”

“But what if someone recognizes me? Is that some kind of test that poses both a problem and an opportunity? I don’t know if I could handle it, especially if I were to be recognized after nearly 50 years.”

Gabriel smiles knowingly and holds a mirror in front of Walt’s face.

Disney looks shocked. “This is supposed to be me? I never ever looked like this, not even at a distance, or close up.”

Gabriel laughs at the absurdity, “Oh, the magic of Heaven at work! How you appear now is a compilation of everything your soul has experienced

since you arrived here. As your compassion grows, it shows in your face, although your voice remains the same. See how kind your face is now?"

Disney is both perplexed and fascinated at the prospect. "Hmmm, I guess so."

"Your essence will touch many hearts and everyone you meet. This is who they will see."

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Toward the end of this explanation, a white-haired man in his late 60s, chewing on an unlit cigar, ambles lamely into the office through a different set of doors. He is the exact image of every photograph of Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain, taken during the author's later years: rumpled white suit, unkempt and bushy hair. He comments amiably, "That's a lot of hooey."

Gabriel and Disney turn toward him—he has shattered the intensity of the moment—they welcome their witty companion.

Clemens demands, "If that's a true statement and your image changes when you get up here, how is it that I'm not changed one little stitch?" He snatches the mirror and makes faces into it.

Gabriel is put off by the challenge but says politely, "Sometimes change can be very, very slow to show up, but fear not, it will happen given enough time, Sam."

Disney looks his friend and earthly mentor up and down, "How else would the beloved authoritative writer, author, and speaker look? I personally get a lot of assurance, knowing he is immediately recognizable."

Clemens issues a mock warning, "Don't you realize where you two gents are? There're mighty fierce penalties for slingin' that sort of stuff around."

Gabriel and Disney burst into wide smiles and the tension evaporates.

Sam asks slyly, "Did I intrude on something secretive ... I hope?"

Gabriel is quick to answer, "Yes, this is a private and urgent conversation, Sam, so we must ask you to excuse us."

"Why-y-y? What'd he do?" He shifts from one foot to another, looks at Disney attentively, and asks, "What'd you do, Walt?"

"Please, Sam, this is important."

"Okay, but I'm bored, bored, bored! Any suggestions for me, maybe something exciting to do?" He shakes his head, shrugs his shoulders. "They won't give me wings," pointing above his head, "and my halo fell off long ago. There's nothing fun left to do here."

Gabriel's eyes sparkle with sudden excitement. "Wait a minute, I have an idea! Take Sam Clemens with you, Walt."

Both Disney and Clemens look shocked, then a delighted grin blooms across Disney's face. He likes the idea.

Gabriel is amused. “You’ll have someone to converse with, and it’ll be a learning experience for Sam.”

He cuts his eyes upward and says, almost to himself, “I hope I can get approval for this,” and walks to one of the crystals swirling in the air. He touches it gently. The room turns pink as a very deep voice vibrates through the air.

The heavenly voice of God booms out, rich, deep, and authoritative, “Ye-e-e-es-s-s?”

Gabriel is surprisingly meek, “Sir, I would like to ask for special dispensation for Samuel Clemens to accompany Walt Disney back to 1968 and travel together until 2016.”

“For what purpose?”

“To assist with Disney’s impending decision. It will also be a golden opportunity for Sam to gain heavenly points toward his growth scope.”

The deep, majestic voice chuckles, “Yes-s, he is severely deficient in that department, and extraordinarily high in the demerit department.”

Clemens crosses his arms in a huff. He traverses to the larger jeweled pond and begins to sift through the diamonds, pretending to deliberately ignore being the object of discussion. He tucks a brilliant jewel—the size of a pocket watch—into his jacket.

Gabriel is wary about whether his idea will be approved, but asks, “Then it’s agreed? Shall Sam and Walt go together to review the last half century of earth changes?”

The silence seems to stretch for eons. Then, “Yes, on one condition.”

The three wait, poised for what’s next. “A new soul is apprenticing with the Akashic Records Department. She shall accompany your travelers to be certain they do not change, alter, modify, vary, or amend any past events.”

Clemens looks around and shakes his head furiously from side to side.

The masterful voice booms, “You have a problem with this, Sam?”

He protests, pulling at his shirt collar as if it were overly starched, and staunchly refuses, saying, “I’m not gonna take any part in breaking in a new soul. They’re pitifully naïve—and she is a woman! No, I’m not gonna do it!”

Gabriel nods briefly, understanding, then raises his arms upward in invitation.

A swing descends dramatically, ethereal music and colors cascade from above. A lavender mist arrives and swirls around the swing. A soft, unemotional female voice greets the three shyly. “My name Eepia. Eepia really will do a good job for you.”

She has a stilted speech pattern indicating she is not yet at ease with their language or jargon. Disney interjects, gallantly, "Forgive me, Eepia. I've never met a new soul before. I seem to be having a problem seeing your face."

Clemens is irritated. "Consarn it Walt, they have no faces, they are that new. They walk around askin' everybody, 'What's that?' and 'How come yer doing that?' They will send you round the bend if ya spend much time with them."

Gabriel reiterates emphatically, "Do you remember, Walt, I said that everything you do shows up as character on your face? She has not had a chance to become visible because she is brand new. With time, Eepia will take on her own traits. Have you not noticed Sam's still the same?"

Disney disregards this line of questioning, because he's remembered what he was doing before coming to the office and needs an answer. "Before we go back in time, I really want to help that little cartoonist I was observing earlier."

"Don't worry Walt, she'll be just fine. Your situation is much more urgent. The three of you are to leave immediately."

Clemens shakes his head, walks to another pond, picks up a large diamond, exhales sharply on it and polishes it on his coat. Gabriel glides over, puts his hands on Clemens' shoulders and turns him back around with minimal effort. "Samuel, you will be accompanying Walt and Eepia. You, too, will be a solid projection, enabling you to communicate openly with the people you will encounter."

Clemens is adamant, remains stubborn, "Hold on ... I didn't agree to any of this."

Gabriel ignores Sam's retort and instructs them, "You'll arrive at random times and places for up to one hour in any given year, based mostly on Walt's thoughts, desires, intentions, and particular 'imagineering' style. You'll visit different events in the history of the last half century or so of earth years."

Clemens puffs out his chest, "Don't I get any say about this?"

Gabriel glares into Clemens' eyes, challenging him, "Ahem, you don't want to participate?"

"Why no, I didn't say that, no siree! I just feel like a piece of bloody rare steak arriving on a restaurant plate. I have no say in my immediate fate and I don't like it."

Gabriel pats Clemens on his back to comfort him. "I'm sorry Sam, this inordinate amount of pressure must be difficult for you, but we are facing a deadline. When you finish your experience in any year, you will be transported quickly and immediately to another historical time frame, depending on what Walt has been thinking about, and eventually meet back here with me."



Clemens chews defiantly on the still unlit cigar. “No!”

Gabriel ignores this interjection and turns to Disney. “Once back here, we’ll visit your current physical body. Then you will decide whether to return to earth life in 2016, or decide to stay here with us, doing what you do best for the rest of eternity.”

Clemens, defiant, protests, “Why was I never given a chance to go back to my past? I left behind a few people and some outstanding loans I’d like more than a little bit to spend time enjoying their rewards of. Also, I’d like to help reseed a few acres in Nevada I accidentally burned up.”

Gabriel is adamant, “Not possible, my friend. You see, Sam, Walt Disney died during a time of greater scientific possibility. He was able to have his body frozen until medical science could advance enough to cure or manage his disease which, during your life and time frame was, shall we say, not yet available?”

Clemens quickly looks Disney up and down and, with an impish grin exclaims, “Yer frozen? Naked and frozen somewhere?”

Disney laughs and nods. He begins to shuffle aimlessly about the room, looking here and there for possible small tools easily available—just in case a need arises—finally, his tour complete, he stands ready to take the next step.

Sam is no longer reluctant, “Let’s go! This is something I wouldn’t miss! Only—you are in charge of overseeing this infant entity. Age brings with it some built-in pluses, and not having to deal with novices is one of the best.”

Gabriel hands a sparkling round crystal to Eepia. She reverently cradles it in her hand as he explains, “Eepia, this is a portable connection to the Akashic Records. It contains accounts of every earthly event for the past 50 years, including major situations that cannot and must not be altered. It will glow and emit a particular sound when either man oversteps his limits; even you are accountable. Immediately remind them to stop and let the past continue as it should have, or else suffer possible dire consequences.”

“Yes, Eepia understand cause and effect; as above so below.”

Disney asks, concerned, “Will she be visible to the people we meet? Will they see and hear her?”

“Not in this present form. She is visible only to you two. With earthly experiences and under your tutelage, she will become recognizable as a fine, upstanding young lady.”

Clemens walks over to the larger pond, pulls out the large jewel from his pocket and tosses it back—but immediately picks it up again and scratches a deep gash in one of the nearby walls’ reflective surfaces to verify it is a true diamond. He smiles, satisfied, gives a thumbs-up sign and tosses it onto the glittering pile. It lands with a thud and sets off a cascade, a tiny avalanche of

sparkles. “When I left earth, I was feeling alone and old. Useless. I resented having nobody to play with anymore. I never wanted to be a grown-up ... let alone an old grown-up. Yes, I have a hankerin’ to go along with you, Walt my boy.”

Grinning at Clemens’ thoughtfulness, Disney responds, “Sam, I’m delighted. Besides, it might include a visit to one of your own previous haunts ... to be determined.”

Walt’s mind is already calculating a possible prank to pull on his long-time mentor and confidant.

“Maybe in Connecticut?” Clemens reminisces, “It was safe and quiet there, even had my own think-tank room! Oh, such sweet surrender. Lots of memories there ... and I was busy on other projects, overseeing my book sales, watching out for my daughters who were still alive, Livvy too.”

“As I recall,” Disney asks, already knowing the answer, “didn’t you predict your own demise?”

He smiles a broad grin, “It was in 19-aught-nine, I remember it clearly still; after all, I was there to prognosticate it.”

He points to himself, inflating his ego, “With absolute authority I quote myself: I came in with Halley’s Comet in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it. It will be my life’s greatest disappointment iffen I don’t go out with it. I was right, declared dead the day after the comet reached its closest approach to earth, ending the supposition about my death being greatly exaggerated by all news sources.”

He turns to Gabriel, “Okay, Gabriel, how do we do this?”

“It is all taken care of, I think. Wait a moment, let me check.” He touches the large crystal obelisk on his desk gently; the room shifts from pink to blue.

That deep, resonant voice permeates everywhere, “Yes, Gabriel?”

“Are there any last-minute instructions for our three travelers?”

“Yes-s-s. Enjoy yourselves and learn all that you can. And Samuel, try to behave—cancel that. Be yourself. Remember Walt’s in charge, it’ll be less stressful for you. And Walt, before you go, try your best to suspend any disbelief, OK? Enjoy the journey.”

Disney nods in acknowledgement.

A sparkling radiance encompasses them. Twinkling lights shimmer from above, surrounding the three shapes; they dissolve into timelessness.

Gabriel looks concerned, almost sad, as he watches them dissolve into sparkling light.

Clemens reminds Disney as their forms shift, “As a journalist of some renown, I say to you ... use the five W’s: who, what, when, why, where, and how. And keep it simple.”

Disney thinks to himself during the relocation, Okay Walt, what's my mission during this first jump back to earth? What can I glean from this time-frame experience? Will I get the deeper message, if any shows up?

"Oh, I nearly forgot," Gabriel calls out to them, knowing full well they will hear him, "Sam, you do realize Eepia is now under your tutelage, to help you earn at least some positive merit points. Who knows, she may even help to neutralize your current deficits. Have an excellent adventure."

A loud anguished cry is heard from Sam.

Walt grins, but feels a twinge of anxiety because he realizes he must become a compassionate moderator of sorts and be an empathetic bridge between a stubborn curmudgeon and a totally innocent new soul.



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