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This book is a work of fiction. References to real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales are intended to provide a sense of authenticity, and are used fictitiously. All other characters and incidents and dialogue are drawn from the author's imagination and are not to be construed as real. The timing of the current SARS-CoV-2 is coincidental with the writing of this novel that refers to a virus as ICD-9-CM.

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“Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.”

- Genesis 2:7

“So, the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the Lord God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

“At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’”

- Genesis 2:21-23

*“When he opened the seventh seal, there was **Silence in Heaven...**”*

-Revelation 8:1

“If a killing type of virus strain should suddenly arise by mutation...it could, because of the rapid transportation in which we indulge nowadays, be carried to the far corners of the earth and cause the deaths of millions of people.”

- W. M. Stanley,
In Chemical and Engineering News,
Dec. 22, 1947

About this Book

Devastation comes to Earth beginning in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and worldwide civil unrest. This is a fictional account of apocalyptic events depicting the seven-year tribulation period as described in Revelations.

In 2023, a neutron bomb obliterates the population of Budapest, releasing a deadlier virus than the COVID-19. Entire cities throughout Europe collapse one by one. At the same time, high-tech nations unleash their secret weapon, Human Interactive Robots (HIR), in a world-wide effort to gain and solidify control.

Asha Hawkins, the first female Green Beret and her protege Cyrix, who is an HIR, are sent in to stop the spread of cyborg armies in a chaotic world of mass destruction.

When Asha disappears along with millions of others in 2023, Cyrix is left to chronicle the end time events - with her sophisticated Solid-State Drive (SSD) - events that culminate in 2026 with the Battle of Armageddon.

SILENCE
IN
HEAVEN

A NOVEL



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Breaking News Alert

The State Department has established a “repatriation task force” to urgently bring back thousands of U.S. citizens stranded abroad as international borders throughout Europe and Asia shut down in an almost futile effort to stop the spread of the ICD-9-CM pandemic.”

Ash looked troubled by the built-in teletext message that had just flashed across the screens on our forearms. The news was troubling to be sure, but I waited for her response.

“I had a feeling that our government would be calling for all Americans to return home.”

“This is not a wise decision,” I replied. “We will bring the virus to America.”

“I know.”

Ash did not want to be stuck on foreign soil and you could tell by her perplexed look at this obvious fact.

I continued to speak. “I sure hope there is a plan to quarantine every plane load of people who go back.”

“I hope so too,” Ash added. “otherwise, it will be the end of our nation as we know it.”

“Nation or world?” I asked.

“All of it,” she said.

PART
ONE

ONE

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Humans call me Cyrix. My identification model number is C01Y2R1I0X. My creator, Staff Sergeant Asha Hawkins, calls me Cy. I am one of the very few living entities that she allows to call her Ash.

I am a Human Interactive Robots (HIR) Android. I am both programmed and compelled to give the following account.

Today, July 1, 2023, is a day I shall never forget. As an HIR, I am not supposed to have human emotions. However, something unique happened to me. It was a first. I shed an *Oreo*, otherwise known as a Synthetic teardrop.

The reason? Staff Sergeant Asha Hawkins vanished into thin air. Disappeared right before my eyes. She had warned me about this coming event and thus the reason for this particular data programming review.

The event happened like this: We stood facing the night sky. Our four-legged companion, *Tag*, sat next to us. He was a well-trained German Shepherd who was part of our team.

It was one of the few places left where one could catch a glimpse of the clear sky that was not covered by smoke, haze, or dark clouds.

We were about fifty meters from the entrance to a top-secret hidden bunker located in the Badlands of South Dakota. The night sky was beautiful. Millions of stars kind of beautiful, and the air cold. It was quiet. Peaceful. We both found it difficult to believe that under the circumstances, we were still on planet Earth.

Ash and I always stayed warm even in the worse conditions because of our built-in environmental enhancements. Tag was

equipped with certain bionic enhancements as well. All it took was a flick of a switch. Ash wore a black T-shirt, Army fatigues, and a pair of Waterproof Newton Ridge hiking shoes. Ash's weapon of choice, a SR-15 E3 CQB, was slung across her back. Her carbine was always equipped with a Nightforce scope. Weighing just over six pounds, she liked the light feel of it along with the fact that it had a point target effective range of 500 meters.

Copying her, I slung my FN SCAR-H/MK17 assault weapon across my back as well. That was the weapon she had assigned me.

It was a habit for Ash to find solitude and admire "God's craftsmanship," as she called it. Her brown eyes always reflected contentment during this meditation time.

I have looked into her eyes many times, during peace and during combat. They reflected intensity in battle and a settled ease when calm. Quite the contrast.

Using a human idiom, I said, "A penny for your thoughts."

Ash smiled that sweet smile, stared right at me, and said, "I am just getting some fresh air...and praying for you."

"Praying? For me? Why?"

"Because. I want you to go where I am about to go. I think about your questions all the time. How you want to go anywhere I go."

"That's true," I assured her. "You are my companion, my sister-in-arms. Most of all, you are my creator."

After I said that last part, she gave me a surprised look as if she had never considered such an idea. It had been a week before when Ash said to me, "If things continue to go the way they are, don't be surprised if I vanish."

"Vanish?"

"Yes, to meet God. I would be caught up together with many other people in the clouds and disappear."

My circuitry system received the data and I tried to analyze what she had said. It did not register. So I asked, "What do you mean by meeting God?"

"I believe the time has come for the believers to meet with our Creator."

My circuits surged as I analyzed. "You were created? You are a human, no?"

"Yes, I am. I believe that we humans were created by God."

"You have not told me about God before. Who is he or she? Have we ever met?"

Her eyes became sad. A tear ran down her cheek that she wiped away. Ash rarely cries. “I should have spoken to you about God before. God created the world and everything in it. Then evil and sin entered through mankind and God sent his Son, Jesus Christ to redeem us from our sins.”

My processors were analyzing the data, but I was not conceptualizing her words. “Maybe you should run a diagnostic on me because the data you are giving me is not processing. I may have a dysfunction.”

“You are not dysfunctional. It is a hard concept to process. It is a matter of the human soul... of unconditional love... like the love I have for you. Cy, I formed you with materials from this planet Earth, from its soil. I formulated a substance that gave you the breath of life. I did all I could to try and place into you... a living soul. B - but I am not God. I never was.”

That’s when it hit me. “So if you vanish, I will not be going with you? What about Tag?”

She continued to stare and said, “Um, you know what? You just gave me an idea. Come on. We have work to do.”

I was following her back towards the bunker entrance when to my astonishment, she was no longer visible. “Ash? Where did you go? Are you hiding from me? Asha Hawkins?”

I did not see her anywhere. That is when I knew. I said, “Oh Ash. You are gone!” Tag swept past me looking around the perimeter, sniffing here and sniffing there. He was as mystified as I was.

But our search was unsuccessful. My tracking apparatus is impeccable, but nothing. Even Tag, who was one of the best tracking dogs, went no further than a tight circle from where she was last seen.

Ash was some kind of special - the first female to earn a Green Beret. It did not come without a cost.

The year was 2020 and she received her beret six months after graduating high school. At the time of her high school graduation, she was in the Tennessee National Guard and had already attended Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia. She was able to attend during the extended Spring break, prolonged by the COVID-19 virus.

Her real dream was to become an elite member of the Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha, or ODA, team. Ash was well aware that if she were able to accomplish this feat, she would

be the first female to have done so. “I have always wanted to be like my dad,” she told me.

Following her graduation ceremony, Ash requested and was accepted to the Special Forces qualification course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. There seemed little doubt that she had some help from her father who had high connections and was able to “pull some strings,” as she phrased it.

Ash began with the initial 24-day assessment screening program. Mastering the basic military skills, which her father had already taught her, came easy for her and she passed everything. Her evaluation was approved by Special Forces supervisors for her to continue.

She then entered Phase II of the qualification course that included the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) portion. This particular phase had started with a quarantine because the coronavirus had eliminated 75% of the 110 students who tested positive. Ash tested negative, so she was able to move on.

But, in Phase IV, she was in the Robin Sage training phase that served as a realistic test of leading indigenous people into combat and sabotage operations. This portion stopped her cold, not just with the program... but with her life. It almost became her undoing.

She spoke of the ordeal with me one evening when we were alone on a training mission. She gave me all the details. I could tell it still weighed on her, that she was still trying to overcome the post-traumatic stress associated with the event. A stress that often disrupted her sleep.

With two days remaining in Phase IV while leading a group of indigenous soldiers on a mission, she was captured by the OPFOR, or Opposing Force volunteers who were from many other military units throughout Fort Bragg.

She was betrayed and lured into an abandoned shack by two of her own team members...except that the shack was not empty. Four other men waited for her with the instructions to treat her like any enemy force would treat her if they had captured an American soldier in enemy territory - a Green Beret soldier... even more so if that soldier was a female.

When the men attempted to subdue her by tying her arms over her head to a ceiling beam, she put up a fight. I would not have expected her to have done anything less... being a Black Belt in Taekwondo.

Ash landed a couple of swift kicks right where it counted. Although she held her own for as long as she could, Ash was overwhelmed by six men, two of whom were a bit incapacitated. They beat her to a pulp, as she put it. A beating that included a baseball bat to her legs, breaking both of them. That's what it took to bring her down; six men and a baseball bat.

Ash was in the reflection mode when telling me the story. Almost as if she were reliving it. "I was in sooo much pain. I couldn't believe it. My legs throbbed and I was hanging by my wrists from the ceiling, my eyes swollen shut, yet, I did not want to lose consciousness. I wanted to remain defiant," she said.

"I could not believe what these goons were doing to me. When the leader brought his face close to mine, I saw evil in his eyes. Well, I defy evil, so I spit in his face... blood and all. I was so angry and disgusted. I saw that evil look grow hideous. But it was priceless. All I could do was laugh...which I did. Oh Cy, if you could have seen his look."

I smiled, but could not imagine her fortitude at that moment. She did not have to say anymore after that, but she continued.

"The lout said, 'That was a big mistake, honey.' Then he jerked my boots off. Remember, I had two broken legs, although I didn't know it at the time. And yes, I screamed in pain."

I have heard her scream before... in combat. Nonetheless, she insisted on demonstrating because the next thing I know she shouts, "AAAHHH! JESUS, HELP ME!"

I must admit, I jumped. "Ash, are you okay?"

She looked at me and said, "Yes, of course. I was just telling you what happened. The pain was unbearable. I yell like that every time I think about it!"

"Well," I told her. "Let us not talk about it anymore, okay?" I looked at her with pity from the bottom of my heart-shaped processor.

"I'm almost done. After I screamed, I looked up and saw a light. The light looked like an angel with wings. The wings were flapping loud, then I fell asleep."

"In the hospital, my dad told me that it was a helicopter and that it landed outside the hut. A team rescued me from those creeps. He also told me that the mug shots of those thugs looked rough- cuts, bruises, a bandaged nose, an eye swollen shut- because the soldiers who rescued me had a little payback time, beyond the beating I gave them.

They told the MPs and civilian police that the perpetrators resisted arrest and put up a fight. The captain told them that they all looked like that when they arrived... that I had defended myself well.”

I knew the rest of the story. It is documented. In the hospital, she was placed into an induced coma because she also had cracked ribs and a perforated lung. Top military surgeons aided by bioengineers operated on her and gave her biometric enhancements in her legs, and other parts of her body that required attention from her injuries.

When recovered she was awarded the Green Beret - by the POTUS himself, along with the First Lady. The ceremony was not publicized, and the media missed out on a historic event, not just for Ash, but for all women... all because they were busy trying to stir the boiling pot across America, the last stronghold of democracy.

Maybe because physical, durable enhancements were added to both of us, she trained to push herself to the breaking point - and she never gave up on anything. It was not in her to do so. With a never quit-never fail attitude, her tenacity cost her everything when she trained to become the first woman Green Beret.

Back to the current situation. I ran further into the plains to look across the plateau - to stare into the sky - attempting to catch any trace of Ash. But all I saw was a bright lightning bolt, like a shooting star, except that it was fading away from our planet instead of racing across the night sky.

I thought of Ash’s favorite songs called *Stars*. It was performed by one of her favorite groups, *Skillet*. She loved to sing it and now the words ran through my circuitry.

That is what I felt like. Broken. Lost. I did not know what to do. I thought about going back to my quarters. Then I asked myself, “Why bother? What will I do now without Ash? Without my mentor? Without my creator?”

Thus, the saddest day of my existence - the day when Staff Sergeant Asha Hawkins vanished.

Turns out, she was not the only one. Data teletexes poured into my system like a flood. There were hundreds of millions around the world who suddenly disappeared.

Of course, it was Ash’s departure that struck me hard. *Why did she leave me behind?*

And that's when it happened... the synthetic teardrop. I felt something odd on my cheek and touched it with my finger. It was wet and clear like a crystal. However, although it was like a water drop, it did not dissolve. It took the form of a gel cap. So, holding the drop between my forefinger and thumb, I brought it near my eyes for a closer inspection.

A quick analysis of it confirmed my suspicions. It was indeed an *Oreo*. The most interesting aspect of this *Oreo* was that the drop contained readings- a DNA structure. In this case, that of a hybrid. I was getting both synthetic and human readings.

I recalled a verse that Ash left with me not too long ago. She quoted from Psalm 126. *Restore our fortunes, Lord, like streams in the desert. Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.*

Funny how some things trigger others.

So, for the record, I will say this: "I have sown with a tear, Ash. I have it with me here to prove it. Come back for me. Please come back."

*So here I am, lifting up my heart
To the one who holds the stars*

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