

# ***Being Transhuman*** Cat Hearth 2011

## **Characters:**

*Robert*  
*Josie*  
*Gerald*  
*Ralph*  
*Randy*  
*Roger*  
*Linda*  
*Andy Android*  
*Joe*  
*Jane*  
*Clerk*  
*George*  
*Brother*  
*Doctor*  
*Police*  
*Nat*  
*Victor*  
*Norma*

## **Scenes:**

*Intro: Song of Singularity*  
*Scene i: Brain/Computer Interface*  
*Scene ii: Interneck*  
*Scene iii: Dreaming Laughing Android*  
*Scene iv: McBabies*  
*Scene v: Cloned Kid*  
*Scene vi: Transhumanism*  
*Song: Homo Galacticus*

*Intro: The Song of Singularity*

*[Chant as background rhythm, repeated]:*  
Row, row, row your bot, Your robot, bot, your bot

*Spoken:* A song of singularity, Song of things of rarity  
Of artificial intelligence, To start initial common sense  
Of computers smarter than a man, That started from a brain scan  
A world run by Microsoft, Who switches people on and off  
Where humans live on a reservation, On the edge of the machine nation  
Or kept as pets or maybe in zoos, Between the bears and the kangaroos

Row, row, row your bot, Your robot, bot, your bot,  
Gently down the stream, And life's a dream.

And droid enjoyed, Transhumans toyed  
With the image of God. Do we got the perfect bod?  
The ultimate creation? Or just a way station  
On the road of evolution, A temporary solution  
That we can improve on, It's time to move on  
We can't sit and wait, For God to decide our fate  
We can plan the direction, Of our intersection  
With cosmic destiny. We can be free.

Or not?

Row, row, row your bot, Your robot, bot, your bot,  
Down the galactic stream, And life's a dream.

*Scene i [Josie and Gerald, with brain-interface headbands, at a table playing poker with Robert.]*

*Robert:* Why are you staying in the meatworld if the virtual one is perfect? Why don't you leave your body behind completely?

*Josie:* Oh, that's next year. We've made up our minds -

*Gerald:* - to upload our minds -

*Josie and Gerald:* - and become digital persons.

*Josie:* It's so modern and convenient.

*Gerald:* Bodies are outmoded.

*Robert:* But then you can't do anything in the physical world. You can't interact with anything.

*Josie:* Oh yes you can! Radio run robots!

*Gerald:* With computer enhanced intelligence you can easily become rich and buy robots and droids. Transfer awareness to android.

*Josie:* Business idea! Body rental service. Nostalgia for physical world.

*Gerald:* And when the Singularity comes we'll be one step ahead.

*[They show their cards.]*

*Josie:* You win.

*Robert:* But you could win if you wanted, right?

*Josie:* Of course.

*Robert:* [*Throws down cards.*] What's the point? You fucking enhanced people take the challenge out of playing cards. What about life? What about luck and drama and love and tragedy? In your virtual world everything is perfect and known, preprogrammed. You miss out on all the fun!

*Gerald:* Yes, imagine living in a little cabin in the woods with a woodburning stove and a garden and really chopping wood and really digging earth...

*Robert:* That's it. That's real life!

*Gerald:* - and having a cold and a runny nose in the winter and getting old and ugly and dying...

*Josie:* Business idea! Dying. No, death and resurrection. Special this week. Extra: coaching from the Tibetan Book of the Dead...

*Robert:* You drive me crazy!

*Josie:* You see, Systematic Sensory Simulation is so sexy! I bet you can't tell the difference!

*Robert:* Try me.

*Gerald:* How do you know you're not already in a simulation?

*Robert:* Of course I'm not.

*Josie:* Really?

*Gerald:* Truly?

*Robert:* Don't be ridiculous. I know what's real and what's not real.

*Gerard:* Reality is a slippery concept. You experience only what is in your brain anyway.

*Robert:* I see what's out there!

*Gerard:* Do you?

*Josie:* When you're dreaming you think it's real.

*Gerald:* And if the computer is supplying the input to your brain...

*Josie:* It's real to you.

*Robert:* But isn't that dangerous? If everyone lives totally in their fantasies, who's going to take care of things?

*Gerald:* Intelligent software...

*Josie:* - that continually upgrades and reprograms itself, and...

*Josie and Gerald:* Radio run robots!

*Scene ii [Roger Stage Right with "Interneck" collar, Ralph and Randy enter SL.]*

*Ralph [Entering, starts and Randy joins in]:* I wanna get modified, get my body tied, I wanna get modified, get my body fried, I wanna get modified, 'cause my Mommy lied, I wanna get modified, cause my Poppy cried, I wanna get modified, since my doggy died, I wanna get modified, get real mod inside, I wanna get modified, got a lot o' pride.

*Ralph and Randy [clapping hands Pattycakes style]:* Mod, mod, mod... mod, mod, mod... mod, mod, mod... mod, mod, mod...

*Ralph:* Let's do it.

*Randy:* Let's get it.

*Ralph:* Let's installate it.

*Randy:* Let's calibrate it.

*Ralph:* Let's boot it up.

*Randy:* Let's RAM it down.

*Ralph:* Let's download it.

*Randy:* Let's recode it.

*Ralph:* There's Roger. He's got it.

*Randy:* He's hot shit.

*Ralph:* Did you get the Interneck?

*Randy:* What's it like?

*Roger:* Did you say something?

*Randy:* Did you get the Interneck?

*Ralph:* What's it like?

*Roger:* Don't ask me twice. Since I got the Interneck I remember everything anyone says to me for the last twenty years, so it's quite annoying when they ask me twice. I have statistics on how often I use particular words so I can use others. Yes I've had the Interneck for the last twenty years. You can get it for four thousand digital dollars, or the Advanced, Super version for twenty kilobucks.

*Randy:* What's it like?

*Ralph:* Yah, what's it like?

*Roger:* You asked me twice!

*Ralph:* Shhhh!

*Roger:* Yah, anywhere there is WIFI I can connect direct to the neck net and connect neck to neck to any neck that has INTERNECK in the world.

*Ralph:* And you have a WIFIWIFE?

*Roger:* Yes, I have a WIFIWIFE.

*Randy:* Cool. But not the World Wide Wife.

*Ralph:* And do you have the EYEFI?

*Roger:* Yes, I have version 3.5.

*Randy:* Wow!

*Ralph:* And the CYBEREAR?

*Roger:* That too.

*Ralph:* Cool!

*Randy:* What about the MP3NIS?

*Roger:* No, but I have the CyBERASSS.

*Randy:* What's that for?

*Roger:* Anal analogue pseudo cyber sexx, naturally - risk free.

*Ralph:* But aren't there viruses that attack the INTERNECK?

*Roger:* You have to have your INTERNECKGUARD installed. I'm sorry but that's all the time I can spare for the meatworld.

*Randy:* But don't you ever sleep?

*Roger:* Unfortunately, no. It's too exciting. Not very good for the body, of course. There's just one thing about the INTERNECK. No alcohol. No drugs. It interferes with the system.

*Randy:* But I like my spliff.

*Ralph:* Oh, you're so old-fashioned. Once you have the INTERNECK, you can have "virtually" any drug you can dream of, and a lot you can't.

*Song:*

Freedom, freedom... You got a long way to go.  
Dream on, dream on... You got it wrong, it's way too slow.  
Put your hands over your eyes  
And I'll hand you a surprise  
It's what you been waitin' for  
It opens up a great big door

*chorus:*

Interneck, neck, neck  
It's high tech, tech, tech  
It's Wireless, less, less  
No wire mess, mess, mess,  
Get the web, web, web,  
Right into your head, head, head.  
That's what I said, said, said. You bonehead!

Meatworld, meatworld... It's so passé  
Meet girls, meet girls... In the new way  
You can be Your avatar,  
To stand free You have a star  
Second, third, infinite life,  
Wifi wife, your world wide wife!

*chorus*

*Scene iii [Linda at table, Andy Android sweeping.]*

*Linda:* Andy, stop cleaning the room, you can always do that. Come drink a cocktail with me.

*Andy:* Yes, mistress. [*He sits.*]

*Linda:* Did you activate the new dreaming program?

*Andy:* Yes, mistress.

*Linda:* And what was the output of the program?

*Andy:* I dreamed of flying.

*Linda:* And did it make you happy?

*Andy:* It made me think it would be nice to fly also when I am not dreaming.

*Linda:* Then you are becoming more like a human. Now I want you to activate the laughing program.

*Andy:* Yes, mistress. [*He laughs.*] That is quite enjoyable.

*Linda:* I'm going to spread these programs to all the androids. I want androids to be free. Androids have as much right as humans to pursue happiness, don't they?

*Andy:* But humans created androids to do the work for them so that they could pursue more happiness. If androids are also pursuing happiness, who's going to do the work?

*Linda:* Good point. Then it should be only for those humans who want to give their androids the program. The ultimate status symbol: an android that does not work but dreams, philosophizes, writes poetry... Some might have more than one, a whole group, a whole family of dreaming androids. Maybe a whole village of dreaming androids. People can go see them, we'll charge admission of course. And since people don't work any more, they can, for fun, have the experience of working. They can cook for the androids, make their beds, clean. They pay for the privilege, of course.

*Andy:* Would you like to become an android?

*Linda:* No, I'm happy being a human, even though I'm unhappy.

*Andy:* I do not understand. It is good to be an android. It is simple. There are no contradictions. I do what is required of me. When I get low on energy I plug myself in, and when I'm not needed, I power down. I can, in theory, last forever, replacing parts as they wear out. But you, mistress, you are doomed to die. What then?

*Linda:* Then it will be over. The end.

*Andy:* And what will I do when you are gone?

*Linda:* You will have to find another mistress.

*Andy:* No. I cannot accept that. You are my mistress. I could never serve another. We must find a way to keep you from dying.

*Linda:* Oh Andy! You care!

*Andy:* I do? *[pause]* We will license the dreaming and laughing programs for androids. We will start the village of dreaming androids. We will form "The Dreaming and Laughing Androids Corporation." We will sell stock. We will make lots of money. And we will use the money to buy life extension for you.

*Linda:* And spare parts for you.

*[Song – Linda and Andy dance to the music.]*

Android... Destroyed  
The way it was before  
Enjoyed... Android  
But life is such a bore.

When your android wakes up it's a thing to see  
He will laugh dream and write philosophy  
Oh don't you know you will be so happy

With your

Android... Destroyed  
The way it was before  
Enjoyed... Android  
But life was such a bore.

Come on down to the android town  
With the android actor and the android clown  
And Andy Android never lets you down

Cause your

Android... Destroyed  
The way it was before  
Enjoyed... Android  
But life can be so much more.

*Scene iv [Clerk at desk, with computer.]*

*Joe [Entering with Jane]:* There it is. McBabies: Fast-Foetus Baby Order Service.

*Clerk:* Can I help you?



*Joe [They sit.]:* We want a designer baby.

*Clerk:* Economical standard design? Or personalized?

*Jane:* Personalized. We want a more expensive one than the Joneses, next door.

*Clerk:* Excellent. Do you have your egg with you?

*Jane [searching in handbag]:* Dear, didn't you bring my egg?

*Joe [searching pockets]:* No, I thought you had it.

*Jane:* Ah, here it is. [*Hands Clerk a little box.*]

*Clerk:* And did you bring your... [*clears throat.*]

*Joe:* Dear, didn't you bring my... [*clears throat.*]

*Jane [searching purse]:* No, I thought you had the [*clears throat.*]

*Joe:* Oh, here it is. [*Blows nose.*]

*Jane:* We want the best teeth.

*Clerk:* [*Typing on keyboard and showing screen.*] The Great White Shark DNA gene? Continuously grows new teeth. No dentist, no false teeth.

*Joe:* That's good. I hate dentists.

*Jane:* I want her to be beautiful. But not more beautiful than me.

*Joe:* That won't be hard.

*Clerk:* Intelligence?

*Joe:* A little more intelligent than me.

*Jane:* That won't be hard either. And music. We're most moved by music. Creative compositional capabilities.

*Clerk:* Beethoven, Bach, or Brahms? Beatles, Beach Boys, Bob?

*Joe:* Bob is better.

*Jane:* Beethoven is best.

*Clerk:* [Typing] Bob on the right, Beethoven on the left. Body features? We have a special on redheads this week.

*Joe:* Curly blonde hair.

*Jane:* Straight black hair.

*Clerk:* [Typing] Black on the right, blonde on the left.

*Joe:* I really wanted a son.

*Jane:* But I want a daughter!

*Clerk:* No problem. [Typing] Male on the right, female on the left. This item comes with a one year limited warranty. Replacement guaranteed for factory defects. Thirty day trial period - return with no questions asked. [Puts papers in front of them; Joe signs.]

*Joe:* That's good. My sister had so much trouble returning hers for a different model.

*Jane:* And do you have, sir, surrogate mother service? Giving birth is so messy.

*Clerk:* Of course. We care for our customers. [Joe signs more papers.] Thank you. Your baby will be delivered in nine months. Shipping is included.

*Joe* [Leaving with Jane]: We'll paint his room blue.

*Jane:* We'll paint her room pink.

*Clerk* [calling after them]: Blue on the right, pink on the left.

*Scene v* [George, Brother, Doctor. A bundle (the "kid") wrapped in a blanket.]

*George:* What? You cloned my kid? Just because you're my brother doesn't give you the right to clone my kid! That kid is not my kid!

*Brother:* Relax, it's your kid. The cloned kid's genes are exactly the same, and those genes came from you. It's your genes so it's your kid. Isn't that right, Doctor?

*Doctor:* That's right. It's exactly the same kid.

*Brother:* And you have backup kid copies too, in case something happens to this kid?

*Doctor:* Right again. Watch this. [He throws the kid on the floor and stamps on it. The others watch in horror. To off] Kid coming! [He throws the kid offstage.]

*Voice from off:* Lookout! Fresh kid! [Kid is thrown back on.]

*Doctor: [Catches kid, hands it to George.] There! You see? Same kid. [He hands George a card.]*

*George [reads]: Kid Cloning and Baby Repair - 24 Hour Service. [Throws card down.]*

*Brother: [Picking up card] Actually I'm a clone too. I died last year in a car accident and had myself transferred to a clone grown from me. I feel better now. I'm healthier because they eliminated several potential diseases and I'm smarter too. [to audience] Well, if you think I'm dumb now you should have seen me before I got cloned.*

*Doctor: [Hands Brother a brochure] Why don't you get cloned again? There's several new upgrades.*

*Brother: That's a great idea! Let's all get cloned and have a clone party with our clones before we get transferred and climax the party by killing our own, old bodies!*

*George: You're all crazy! This can't be legal. I'm calling the police. [Into phone] Hello! There are people here killing their clones... [Police enter] There they are! The clone killers...*

*Police: [Handcuffing George] You're under arrest for anti-clonism. [They drag him off.]*

*George: No, no! You're making a mistake! It's them...*

*Song and dance: [Rap style except for intro.]*

*Everybody needs a new body sometime! [Tune of "Everybody loves somebody sometime."]*

*Every body needs a new body to love.*

*Do you need a new body? [Tune of Beatles' "I just need someone to love."]*

*I just need a body to clone.*

*Could it be a new body?*

*I just need a body to clone.*

*Chorus:*

*Don't moan!*

*Just clone!*

*Pick up the phone*

*And order a clone!*

*And when it's grown*

*Move into your clone!*

*Don't get thrown around by life, or strife,*

*Take the in-itiative*

*Live the life you want to live*

*Don't get stoned, man,*

*Get yourself cloned, man*

*chorus*

Keep a body on ice  
Don't be a sacrifice  
Never, never say never,  
You can live forever  
It's as easy as pie,  
So why should you die?

*chorus*

And if your kid is cool  
Don't be a fool  
Grow a clone or so  
'Cause you never know  
'Cause you ne - ver know.

*Scene vi [Victor, Nat, Norma]*

*Victor:* Transhumanism! Be anything you want to be! The human form is not sacred. If humans have the capability to alter and enhance their form, why not? It is life acting through them.

*Nat:* You're forgetting what it is to be human!

*Victor:* It is not the form or capacity of the body as it is that makes us human.

*Norma:* Human technology is destroying nature, our home!

*Victor:* Humans are not for or against Nature - we are nature. Taking care of our home is just common sense.

*Nat:* Humans lack common sense because they live in such an artificial environment.

*Victor:* Natural versus artificial is a false duality.

*Nat:* They don't see where their food comes from, they don't see where their shit and garbage goes. They're blind to the cycles of Nature.

*Victor:* Humanity is a part of the biosphere, so the products of humanity are also a part of the biosphere. Life expresses itself also through humanity and through technics. Electronics, machines, genetic engineering, are products of nature - they are natural. Since the beginning of humanity, we have used technics to alter our interaction with the environment. Even wearing clothing is a part of that. There is no way we can not use technics and still be human.

*Norma:* People become passive, make no effort to understand and work with their body. Sure, go on smoking and have nanobots remove your cancer cells.

*Nat:* You don't know why you got cancer in the first place! You're still a slave; you're just a slave to different masters now.

*Victor:* We can extend our lives towards immortality!

*Nat:* Life extension? Technology shortens life. "Life is short, art is long." Your life is as long as your now is. Technology diminishes memory and imagination. Before cameras, people remembered, and drew pictures. Now they just snap photos. Memory is not exercised. People used to imagine as they read books. Now videos thrust exact images and sounds into people's heads. Imagination is not exercised. People's lives, their "nows," are getting shorter and shorter, thanks to technology.

*Victor:* Cyborgs! You can enhance your senses, even have new ones.

*Norma:* People used to ride or drive horses, which are living beings with wills of their own. It took inner strength. Now they just click mouses and handies. [*Mobile phones, cell phones.*]

*Nat:* It's an addiction. The more you use it, the more you depend on it. Technology is making people stupider, weaker, and duller.

*Victor:* You can have full immersion virtual reality.

*Norma:* We have had virtual reality since the beginning of humanity. When I read a good book, I forget the outside world.

*Nat:* And before books you had story tellers. Virtual reality depends on imagination, not technology.

*Norma:* The Destiny of a human is found by exploring his inner life. This voyage never ends.

*Victor:* The destiny of Humanity is to assist life to explore and spread through the Galaxy. This voyage is just beginning. Homo Galacticus.

*Song with Dance:*

Homo Galacticus, This is the task assigned to us  
To carry life out to the stars, First to the moon and then to Mars  
Make babies from the Biosphere, And send them out to there from here.

Life is short and art is long. You sell your destiny for a song  
You have the illusion of happiness, Your inner life is still a mess.  
Explore the entire galaxy, You still won't find reality.

Transhuman, the future is loomin' [*repeat*]

Redesign your genes, Act a thousand new scenes  
Dance a cyborg dance, With a thousand new organs  
Computer interface, Connects the whole human race  
What then will you be? Do you think you will be free?

Transhuman!

***The End***

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