

Orion Works Sonova Quark

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Seeking Higher Ground

Winter solstice is fast approaching. I hope the year blessed you with good tidings. Ours was a mixed blessing. In our own localized sphere-of-influence we managed to get our house painted with no major complaints or retributions directed at our painters, complements of the spirit of our 100 year-old abode. On the other hand, Charm, our 13 year-old, had plenty to say to our vet when we took her in for an annual rabies and wellness checkup.

We had noticed Charm's behavior recently changed in subtle ways. She seems slightly less active. And her appetite has been off. The vet listened to her heart and immediately picked up a pronounced arrhythmia. This is a brand-new development, and a worrisome development at that. Discussions about Charm's prognosis ensued. The vet would like to schedule multiple tests that would focus on the nature of her heart ailment. We finally got a list of what test and procedures could be done on Charm. Performing the entire list of pokes and prods would cost us up to two grand.

How do I feel about that? Well... Charm is 13 years old. She has crossed into senior cat citizenship. She has also already

gone through several of her 9-lives. The most notable "life" cost us \$1,200 in surgery bills to fix a severed & dislocated hip bone, the result of a misspent youth escapade outside when she failed to jump over a neighbor's fence. Had it not been for the fact that we had attached an RFID radio locator device to her collar it is very likely that we would not have found her in time to save her life. She did not come home one evening. Earlier the same evening we started looking for her with our radio locator device. We could tell she was nearby, and likely just across the street. But it was pitch black outside, and she wasn't responding to our calls. She seemed to be our neighbor's back yard just across the street from us. We assumed Charm was actively hunting prey and could not be bothered by her fretting human servants to please to come home. (This has happened many times in the past.) We decided she would eventually return when she was damned ready to do so. But she didn't. The next morning we got the locator out where in daylight we could better the layout of our neighbor's fenced in back yard. I had no choice but to wrangle my way through the fence to get closer to the signal's source. We discovered Charm had hunkered down in a window well. Charm. She was injured and unable to jump back over the fence and back to the safety of our home. She spent the entire night hiding the window well in silence making herself unnoticeable to potential predators lurking in the night. Why she had not responded to our pleading calls only 10 to 15 feet away from her continues to vex me. But injured cats and instinct must have kicked in. Stay quiet! Don't let the predators know where your incapacitated body is.

But back to the present, we were told we would have to sedate her with tranquilizers before any of the tests could be performed, a procedure that turns out to be a 12-hour ordeal. Sans the potential costs, the sedation procedure itself... Well, I'm just not hot on.

We need to assess how much testing is warranted and worth \$\$\$ on and weigh it with the fact that Charm has entered her senior years. She is winding down, and that's a natural fact-of-life. How much quality life is left in our senior feline is anyone's guess. Right now, Charm behaves just as lovable and feisty as ever... except that she is slowing down. *More cautious and circumspect*, I think are perhaps better definitions, acknowledging the fact that Charm has learned a few things about the hard knocks of cat life.

Our priority is to extend Charm's quality-of-life in whatever ways seems most practical and cost-effective. Like any other responsible cat or dog owner we want share what time we have left with our furry bundle of claws and barbwire wrapped in a towel. But spending hundreds, maybe thousands of dollars to inform me that her heart is beginning to malfunction and may soon throw a deadly clot that will kill her... well, it sort of strikes me as a moot point. We are certainly open to medications, like blood thinners, if that is recommended. But having to spend well over a thousand dollars to eventually tell us blood thinners is the best medication... I have a real problem with that.

Charm is a cat who was collarless and dumped (or escaped) at rest stop in the lonely deserts of Idaho when we rescued

her more than a decade ago. We know she had original presumably loving owners since a Idaho vet told us she had been spayed. While in our stewardship Charm has always been a special needs cat. A urinary crystal prevention diet and steroids smeared inside her ears every other day for asthma prevention have been on-going staples throughout her rambunctious life that she has more-or less learned to put up with. Also, evening outings are mandatory to prevent progressively aggressive behavior expressed in tearing the house apart. Many of her physical attributes have suggested to us that Charm was blessed with Bengal genes lurking somewhere in her recent DNA ancestry.

Eventually, we will come up with a strategy we can live with. Despite Charm's feral-like tendencies, she has been one of the most demonstratively loyal entities I have had the privilege to have spent a portion of my fleeting 71 year-old life with.

Ouch! Charm just bit me.

Stop typing and pay attention to me!

Or



Other Stuff...

Lately, there has been little time to respond in commentary to other Turbo members. I can feel bad about that, but everyone has priorities and a fixed amount of time in the day to get said those priorities completed. Fortunately within TURBO there are many heavy hitters, like **Andy, Jeanne & Scott, Greg, and Steve S.**, just to name a few, who admirably tow the line producing not only interesting subject material, they respond with pointed commentary, much of which is capable of exceeding the impact of whatever theme they are discussing this month. There are also faithful and frugal minacers, **Kim and Kathi** come to mind, who have never missed fulfilling their minimal requirements. Such minacers are no slouches either. They, themselves, carried the Turbo torch for many years, faithfully collating writings and distributing the works to participating members. Decades later,

after "retirement" they continue to fulfill their Turbo obligations with succinct and informative writing of daily adventures. And then, there are members, like me, who behave like randomly pulsating stars. One month they appear like a quiet dim red dwarf. Move along... nothing to see here. But then, the next month they might end up regurgitating a string of major solar flares that might continue flaring for several more months. Afterwards, it's back to red dwarfdom, perhaps gathering internal energies to once again flare or not to flare, that is the question.

Last month I had some fun writing a small "channeled" segment titled *The Write Hemisphere*. It felt like I had stumbled across a format that seems to serve the expressive needs of the right hemisphere of my brain hopefully in practical and creative ways. I know it has plenty more to say. In fact...

The Write Hemisphere

Hybrids - Part One

Many Earthlings educated in science and biology allow themselves to speculate about the cycles of biological chemistry that might exist on other planets orbiting around other star systems. You now openly speculate that there are most likely countless planets with uniquely different and fascinating life-forms. You understand that speculated diversity depends on the makeup of what's available within a planet's larder combined with accompanying environmental conditions. You have even allowed yourself to consider the possibility that Carbon-based life forms may not be the only chemical architecture the game-of-life might fool around with. This has led many to wonder if carbon-based biology is a only narrow slice of the pie.

All this scientific evidence that you have been able to accumulate and inculcate would not lead you to seriously ponder a premise such as human beings having not originated on planet Earth. When such beliefs come up in discussion some will likely reject them due to a religious-oriented sense of violation of the sacredness of the human genome. Meanwhile, others applying presumably better reasoning skills, the more educated of your species, scientists, and anthropologists, would likely reject such conjecture, scientifically, because there is no data that might lend support to them. The only avenue where such beliefs, where such speculation could be considered acceptable, perhaps even welcomed, is through science fiction and fantasy tales written in books or revealed within the cinematic medium.

Why are we bringing up an unproven premise most are likely to perceive unworthy of consideration? Should you choose to do so, consider pondering why it is that carbon-based Earth lifeforms have managed to spread (though some might describe it as infect) the entire surface of your planet? And that's just what has happened on dry land. There exist countless fascinating lifeforms you have yet to discover thriving deep within your oceans. Also consider an increasing collection of astronomical findings that have detected the basic building blocks of life such as carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulfur, floating about in space pretty much everywhere in the universe. Consider your own local neighborhood, the solar system, and what space probes have discovered so far. Carbon dioxide, water vapor, traces of nitrogen, and complex organic compounds have been detected spewing from ice plumes ejected from the oceans of one of Saturn's moon, Enceladus, as well as carbon dioxide coming from beneath the icy crust of Jupiter's moon, Europa. All of these recent findings give you a pretty good idea how life might very well chose to evolve on other planets even if doing so might have to take millions if not billions of years before it's ready for prime time.

This does bring up a question of how much quality time is needed to kick-start some interesting life forms. At present you are most likely to

conjecture that complex life forms must be kick-started from simple proto molecules. That implies we must allow for a very long time-frame before things start getting interesting. That said, we will interject here that there are ways to speed up the process. More complex life forms can be migrated from planet to another via spacecraft capable of interstellar jumps. This would cut out hundreds and millions of years of tedious hand-beating egg whites into a prurient froth to make a chocolate mousse. While your planet was still just a collection of rubble orbiting a newly formed sun there have existed interstellar civilizations who intentionally attempted to increase preferable real-estate by tilling conveniently located planets to something more compatible with their own home world. There are also countless scientific/prospecting expeditions that have occasionally caused unintended contamination. None of the above-mentioned speculations are concepts you have never considered before. In truth, it's more a matter of trying to find practical ways to either verify or falsify such conjecture - though we would add that at this stage of the investigative process most of such speculation remains focused on investigating mostly-harmless bacterial or single cell specimens rather than looking for ray gun toting mercenaries. Films like "Quatermass and the Pit", "Battlestar Galactica", and Star Trek's Voyager series reveal much for humans to ponder. For example, in a Star Trek Voyager episode "Distant Origin" Janeway's crew encounters a technologically advanced race of reptilians. Voyager's genetic testing of them proves that these reptiles must have initially evolved on earth millions of years ago during the era of the dinosaurs. Janeway speculates that the reptilian race must have managed to escape when the asteroid smashed into Earth wiping out 75% of all life. We would add that such speculation, such lore, does not evolve out of thin air. When such lore becomes popularized we would like to add that much of it is due to an on-going process that helps activate your collective consciousness in ways less threatening and more acclimating for your collective consideration. This process happens all over the universe. It manifests in many formats and different mediums specifically tailored to the genetic makeup of the species at hand, be they land, aquatic, arboreal or countless other environments you have yet to consider. In other words, when it's time to start pondering such tales, it's time. There is more to come. As are the surprises.

Regarding the provenance of the human species, we will state here for your pleasure, which you are free to ponder, or not, that monkey-like proto-ancestors were transported to Earth more than 20 million years ago because the real estate they had originally evolved on was already fully occupied by an advanced space faring sentient species. We will have more to say on the matter in future installments.



