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Species: The Awakening

By Dennis Feldman

For the gods keep the secrets of life
hidden from humans.
Men did, however, figure out one secret.
How to use fire.
And Zeus punished them
with the worst thing he could think of.
Something so terrible,
the writer Hesiod called it the source
of all mortal suffering.
Any guess what punishment
he came up with?
Some kind of disease?
No.
- War?
- Nope.
Fire? Floods? Drought?
None of those.
For their punishment, Zeus gave them...
Women.
- Hello? Uncle Tom?
Back here, in my office.
Hey.
- So, what's today's experiment?
- Biosynthesis.
There are extinct
plant cell walls in this fossil.
Crinoids, a type of echinoderm.
The mature crinoids artificially
resemble flowers.
Hence the name.
Sea Lily.
Very good.
You know, theoretically,
I could use the molecular genetic material
to create a whole new breed of crinoid.
Isn't that a little unnatural?
Yeah.
But interesting, right?
You seem distracted.
Is everything all right?
It's Oxford,
they called me again this morning.
But I can't go to England
and leave you here.

You're the only family I've got.
I'll see you later. I have another class.
Hey, Uncle Tom.
What are you cooking?
A fabulous red wine sauce.
I hope you're hungry.
Tempting, but I have a date.
He should already be here.
As far as going to England is concerned,
you're too talented for this little town.
- Oh, but I thought we already
settled that. - Mmm-hmm.
But what if I came with you?
Really?
You're bright. You deserve it.
And anyway, I'm getting a little homesick.
It'll do us both good.
I don't know what to say.
In cases like that,
it's better to say nothing.
A toast.
To your future.
And to Oxford.
Oh, that must be him.
Don't wait up.
- And thank you.
- Get out of here, have fun.
Miss?
Jesus Christ.
Miranda?
Hey, Miranda, come on,
we're gonna be late.
Miranda, come on, you...
What have we got?
Female. No ID or any clothing.
Some kind of skin rash.
Some jogger found her
passed out naked in the park.
Uncle Tom?
I hope you're hungry.
Tempting, but I have a date.
You're bright.
To your future.
Miss. I need you

to give me your name.
What's your name?
Miranda. Hollander.
Hollander.
These blood levels can't be right.
These aren't human.
We shot them. That's how they came out.
Yeah, right. Nice try.
Stop screwing with me.
Go and do the X-ray.
Okay. You're the boss. Whatever you say.
Just stay still and relax, ma'am.
Just need to shoot another X-ray.
Edward? What kind of joke is this?
Get out!
- What's going on?
- Just get in the car, Miranda.
I don't understand.
When are you going to tell me
what's going on?
We're going to Mexico.
Mexico? Why?
Well, it's beautiful down there.
Haven't you always wanted to see it?
Is it the police you're afraid of?
Yeah.
Whatever happened at the hospital,
I had nothing to do with it.
Right?
Are you saying I killed those people?
Yes.
And no.
"Yes and no"?
What are you not telling me?
You're sick.
- And I can't help you.
- Sick?
With what?
I wish I knew.
But, Uncle Tom...
If I'm sick, shouldn't I go see a doctor
in the United States?
No.
They can't help you either.

Why not?
We're going to Mexico
to find someone named Forbes.
He's an old colleague of mine
from university.
I was his professor.
Although sometimes I wondered
whether it wasn't him teaching me.
He was brilliant. Crazy but brilliant.
But I haven't seen him in years because I...
I didn't wanna have anything
more to do with him.
But he's the only one that can...
That might be able to help you, Miranda.
I tried.
But I...
I guess I failed.
Tell me.
I didn't always work with fossils, Miranda.
I always wanted to tell you the truth.
I just didn't know how.
The truth about what?
Forbes and I made you.
In our lab.
As part of a project we were working on.
I tried to keep it from you.
I just wanted you to have a normal life.
No.
There were these DNA strands...
From somewhere else.
Sent to us.
I mean...
To Earth.
We mixed those DNA strands
with human genes.
Experimented with a new kind of life.
You were one of the results.
But it was wrong.
So I walked away from it.
But I didn't want anything
to happen to you.
So I took you with me.
And raised you as best I could
as a normal human being.

You were all that mattered
to me, Miranda.
You're lying.
Not this time, Miranda.
What about your parents?
Do you really remember them?
My mother was your sister.
No.
I'm an only child. They never existed.
All your childhood memories
were one big story I told you
when you were young.
Again and again, till you believed it.
You only think you remember.
I lied until you stopped asking me
where you came from.
Until you believed we were just
two normal,
happy human beings.
I'm sorry.
I am so...
Terribly sorry.
Lts okay, it's okay.
So, why would Forbes live in Mexico?
I guess some people
come down here to disappear.
And what did you two
have a falling out over, anyway?
Let's just say
we didn't see eye to eye.
I thought what we were doing
was immoral. He didn't.
He was abusing the project.
Uncle Tom?
- What's that?
- Human hormones.
I've been administering them to you
while you slept.
Just...
Two or three times a year
to keep the alien side
of your biology from surfacing.
But ever since you got sick...
They don't seem to work as well.

So, what exactly is wrong with me?
I wish I knew.
It could be an infection,
a toxic reaction of some sort.
Whatever it is, I don't know enough
about your biology to cure it.
Forbes is the one who designed you, so...
He's the only one
who might be able to help.
It's going down.
Yeah, for now.
You're a mixture of human and alien DNA.
A highly functional hybrid.
You can soak up a body of knowledge
like no human can.
I didn't teach you anything, Miranda.
This look familiar?
Of course.
It's the complete works of Shakespeare.
I read this a hundred times.
You've never opened that book in your life.
That's not possible.
Okay.
You know nothing about cars, right?
Right. So what?
Take this.
Close your eyes.
You know that clicking noise you have?
You should switch to a higher octane gas.
That's why...
That's why you get
that metallic tapping sound.
If you sign here, sir.
Your keys, senorita. Enjoy.
I'm looking for an American who lives
down here, the name of Forbes McGuire.
I'm not familiar with this gentleman.
Perhaps I can make some inquiries.
Thank you, I'd appreciate it.
Hey. Where are you going?
I'm going to find Forbes.
Why don't you stay in and rest?
I filled the syringe with the hormones.
If the rash gets worse while I'm gone,

inject it.
I'll see you later.
Hey, nino.
Okay, gracias.
Let me in!
- Hold on there, fellow. Where's the fire?
- Excuse me. Excuse me.
Hey, I know you.
Leland Fisk. San Antonio, Texas.
Same hotel.
Hey, how'd you like to go for a drink?
- No. No, thank you.
- Oh, come on.
Come on! I'm buying. Yeah.
Look, I heard you back at the hotel,
asking that Calderon fellow
about finding a certain somebody.
Well, I'll tell you something,
unless you give him a bribe,
he ain't gonna do nothing.
No, that's the way
it is with these Mexicans.
They play dumb until you play ball.
Now, you seem like a right, nice fellow,
so I'll tell you what I'm gonna do.
I'm gonna cut through all that bull,
and I'm gonna hook you right up.
What are you getting at?
You want to know how
to find Forbes, huh? I'm gonna tell you.
Now, at midnight,
you go down
to the Square of the Blessed Maiden.
There'll be a taxicab there.
You wait till he flashes his lights.
Then you go over
and you get in the back seat of the taxi.
Any business you have with Forbes,
you put it in an envelope
and you give it to the driver.
I'm looking for Forbes McGuire.
Hey, where are we? Is this where he lives?
I'm a friend of Forbes.
I just want to talk to him.

Hey, buddy, are you listening to me?
Come and sit
by my side if you love me
Do not hasten to bid me adieu
Just remember that Red River Valley
And the fellow who loved you so true
Oh, the Red River Valley
Hold on, I'm coming.
Hold your goll-darned horses,
I said I'm a-coming!
- Oh, you don't look so good.
- God damn you!
You set me up, you son of a bitch!
- Now, you just hold on there.
- No!
Now, I don't care who put you up to it,
but, God help me, I'm not leaving here
until you tell me where I find Forbes!
Right now!
Yeah, well, I don't think you're tough
enough to be telling me
what to do in my own hotel room.
You are trespassing.
Put the gun down.
Oh, lookee here.
Oh, is that your new bodyguard, huh?
Put it down, now.
Oh, I'm so scared, I'm scared. I'm...
That cowboy
better not be setting us up again.
What is this place?
He can't be here.
Listen.
Whoever's here, they're behind this door.
Yeah, but how do we get in?
Yeah! Giddyup, girl.
That's it! Giddyup! That's the way.
That's the way I like it!
Fantastic.
Go on. Go on, what'd I say? What'd I say?
Oh, that's a girl. Come on, sweetheart.
Oh, baby.
McGuire.
What the...

Holy shit!
I don't believe it!
As I live and breathe, Tom Hollander.
Why did you try to have me killed?
What are you talking about?
I'm talking about the nun.
You know, the one with the tentacles.
And your friend, the cab driver.
Okay, I do not know
what you're talking about.
You haven't changed, have you?
Hello, sweetheart.
Forbes McGuire.
Have we met somewhere before?
And by the bys,
how'd you two get in anyhow?
You left out a keypad for us.
Oh, my God. We have met before.
You're G-178.
- Her name's Miranda.
- Whatever. She's gorgeous.
Oh, right.
Everyone, yeah, this is Azura.
Azura's my director
of community relations.
We've already met.
This was your nun.
What?
Oh, for God sakes, Azura.
Listen, Tom, I'm really sorry, mate,
I had no idea you were here.
That's because no one
tells me anything anymore.
That's the trouble with these
inferior models, you know.
No complex thinking, love.
Absolutely no higher
intellectual functioning.
But this one?
Come on, sweetheart,
tell me a little bit about yourself.
I hold advanced degrees in Biochemistry,
Comparative Literature and Classics.
Well, well, well,

Tom Hollander.
You sly, old fox.
I mean, come on.
Frankenstein built some stumbling drunk
with a couple of bolts
through his forehead.
Another bloke at Caltech wins tenure
for getting a robot to peel an orange.
And you, you come up with this.
The Holy Grail of every man's dream.
What the...
- Miranda? Miranda?
What's happening to her?
She's sick.
That's the only reason we're here.
Put her up there.
We need an IV line
and 50 cc's of hormones.
Oh, no shit?
Look, I do know what I'm doing, okay?
And keep an eye on her blood pressure.
We need to stabilize
her human hormone levels and quick.
Come on, sweetheart.
You're playing with fire, you know that?
Look, I dabble, okay?
You know, once in a while
I try something out.
And for Christ sakes,
if I can really make
someone's dream come true
by giving them back
a dead relative or whatever, then why not?
Because it's not their dead relative
if they look like them,
but they're half alien.
Do your clients even know that?
They don't need to.
I'm telling you, these things are safe.
The alien side almost never comes out.
I've worked out most of the kinks.
What about your cab driver?
Look, who knows? You know?
Random behavior.

So, okay, there's been
one or two mistakes,
you know,
things I never should have made.
And admittedly, you know,
one or two of those mistakes
might have escaped into town,
but they're unstable.
They die off in a month or two.
Look, it's cool. Trust me.
What's wrong with Miranda? Any ideas?
Yeah.
So, what is it? What does she have?
Old age.
Come again?
Mortality, mate. You know,
there's nothing actually wrong with her.
She's just reached the end of her lifespan.
Her? Are you crazy? Look at her.
Yeah, I know. It's hard to believe, isn't it?
She's young, she's beautiful,
and soon, she's gonna die.
How long?
I mean, you know, until...
Soon. You know, today, maybe tomorrow.
I could try making you another one.
Might not be as smart.
Whatever you might think,
Miranda's a human being.
Well then, tell her the truth.
Tell her she's gonna die.
I mean, isn't that what being
a human being's all about?
What about Azura?
What are you gonna do when she dies?
Don't you care about her?
Hell, no.
Just pop out another one.
Blonde, probably, green eyes and a tan.
I mean, come on, mate.
That's the beauty of all this.
No.
Look, all right then,
don't tell her, you know.

After all, you lied to her in the
first place about what she really was.
Was that because
you respected her as a human being?
Or was it just a convenient way
of keeping things in control?
Oh, shit, mate.
Don't listen to me. What do I know?
I mean, look at me.
Look at this place down here.
I'm the one who should have died off
a long time ago.
I'll tell you, between me, you
and the gatepost,
I kind of hope one of these buggers
polishes me off someday.
Miranda...
I raised you as my niece,
but I love you like my daughter.
Unfortunately,
there's nothing he can do.
And I
just want you to know
I'm truly sorry.
There's something I want to see.
You name it.
I don't know
if I'm human or not.
Or if I have a soul or not.
But, whatever I've done, I have to settle it.
Look, Miranda,
whatever you want to do, we'll do.
Wherever you wanna go, we'll go.
I would like to be back home.
Of course. But...
And go to the police there.
The police?
I killed people in that hospital.
I need to take responsibility for that.
Miranda...
Even if...
Even if I don't make it home,
I have to try.
Aw!

Group hug?
Come on, you two. Come with me.
Okay, so there is one way
to extend Miranda's life.
Why didn't you tell us this before?
Because it requires
ending someone else's.
No way.
I won't be a party to a murder.
You won't get caught, all right?
People disappear around here all the time,
nobody asks too many questions.
You gotta try and think of it
as a genetic transplant.
You know, a complete infusion
of living, healthy, hybrid cells.
Miranda, it's the only way
for you to go on.
It's immoral.
Immoral? Give me a break.
This town is full of scumbags.
Cheats, liars, murderers, rapists,
you name it.
We take one of those guys off the street,
hell, we're doing a public service.
Well, that's... That's not the point.
I'm not a killer.
There must be another way.
Something else we can try.
You have to let me accept this.
I've had a good life,
and mostly because of you.
So, have you thought about what you'll do
afterwards?
Forbes is a lost soul.
Living in a pit of misery.
Maybe you should help him.
Is there nothing good
that could come out of this?
I told you, I want nothing more to do
with this technology.
So you'd leave him here
and go back to working in a museum?
Can you honestly tell me

you've been satisfied
working with things that have been dead
for thousands of years?
Uncle, don't you miss
your true scientific work?
You were my true scientific work.
Miranda?
Hey, hey! Right here, mate.
Get her on the table.
Clamp her down and make it quick.
We need to get a sedative inside her
before she fully turns.
- Turns?
- Yeah.
She's fighting for her life,
and that's when their less attractive
but very, very strong side comes out.
Come on.
Okay.
Okay, that'll stabilize
her for a little while.
But we need to do a human graft soon,
or we'll definitely lose her.
Now, go out and get me a donor.
I need a female, and bring her back alive.
Me? You want me to...
Yeah, it's time to get your hands dirty.
Do you want to save her, or not?
Go!
Looking for me?
Maybe.
Do you want to dance?
Sure.
Let's go.
Should we go somewhere else?
I know a place.
Do me here.
- Turn around!
- What? Now, hey, hey...
Turn around.
- You're kidding.
- You pervert. You prick.
I don't believe this, you're robbing me?
Now, where do you want it?

One in the leg, or two in the ass?
Stop wasting time. Let's take her and go.
Come on, let's get you home.
You had a little too much tonight.
Who are you pricks?
Where am I?
Let me go, let me go!
Shut up! You're about to be harvested.
Please!
Please let me go, please, please!
Why?
Let me go! No!
No, no!
First off, we're going
to impregnate Colette with alien DNA.
Time to go fishing.
Oh, God.
Hey, no worries, mate,
she won't feel a thing.
This is monstrous.
Fertilization achieved.
Now, the trick here
is injecting the stem cells
at just the right point in their evolution.
In other words... Now.
I'd forgotten how fast this thing went.
Hey, hey, what's happening?
The cells are infusing all over her body.
That can't be good.
Come on, you're killing her!
Vital signs critical.
Stop this! Stop it now!
Hey, hey, hey, it's done, dude.
It's out of my control.
Oh, crap.
Miranda, easy. Easy.
Easy. It's me.
Come on, Miranda. Miranda, come on.
It's me, it's okay.
You're all right now. Come on.
Hi.
Where am I?
In the presence of two bloody geniuses,
that's where.

Guess what? You're all better now.
- But how did you...
Stem cells, baby.
Here, drink some water.
Temperature's normal,
blood pressure's excellent.
All systems are go.
I don't know how to thank you.
Hey, look what I found for you.
Ovid's Metamorphoses.
I never thought I'd read Latin again.
Intellectual functions appear present.
The Metamorphoses is about people
getting changed into other creatures.
Your idea of a joke?
Yeah, well...
Then again, we haven't heard her
conjugate any Greek verbs yet.
Try me.
I'll give you all the tenses.
Past, present, future, subjunctive...
What have we done, mate?
Okay, I'll stop. Just let me do one thing.
What's that?
Fuck this girl here.
Miranda, what are you talking about?
Your director of community relations.
Let me fuck her.
Okay, Azura, love, there's something
I wanted to talk to you about outside.
Just come with me, babe.
Miranda, are you feeling okay?
Never better.
So, where to?
We can't go home, right?
Police are probably looking for me.
I thought you wanted to talk to them.
Face up to the whole thing.
Why? So I can rot in jail?
What's the point of extending my life
if I can't enjoy it?
Regardless, I think it might be
a good idea to go back to the hotel.
You need some rest.

Rest? I'm not tired.
I'm going to go live. Experience things.
So, what do you say
we grab one of Forbes' bottles
of top-shelf tequila
and get naked?
Hey, hey. Come on,
what are you talking about?
Come on. I know the truth, now.
You're not my real uncle.
No. No, Miranda, no. No.
Fine. Fuck you, then.
What's up?
Is this some perverted stunt of yours?
What the hell have you done to her?
I extended her life.
Just like you asked me to.
- There might be one or two glitches...
- Have you seen her blood cells?
It's chaos. She's not stabilizing.
We've got to do something.
- Another transfusion, more stem cells.
- That won't help.
That woman's here to pick up the dog.
Look, hang on a sec, mate.
For God's sake. Azura!
You got the money?
- Lady?
- Yes, yes.
Here's the money. There it is.
Release form.
My sweet, sweet Pamela. It's you.
Actually, it's a fucking alien facsimile.
And you might want to remember that.
Good girl.
It's you!
Hey, man, I'm sorry about that.
I had a bit of business to...
Miranda?
Miranda!
She's gone. You hear? She's gone.
I gotta find her. She's sick.
- She's not just sick, she's dangerous.
- I don't care.

Listen, mate, if you're gonna go,
at least take this.

- What the hell is that?

- Hydrochloride acid.

Now, it won't kill her,
but it might slow her down.

- This dosage, on the other hand...

- I'm not gonna kill her!

I'm gonna find her, bring her back here,
refine the hormones, temper the mixture,
and get her back to what she was!

- Dude, do not underestimate these things.

- Stand out of my way!

This is your fault, McGuire.

You always did sloppy work.

Listen, Tom, I'm telling you.

She's got no human imperative anymore.

She's pure creature.

She'll most likely
be pregnant before nightfall.

In two weeks,
this entire town will be overrun.

She's sterile!

I took care of that a long time ago.

I wouldn't count on it.

With her new stem cells,
there's no telling what she might do.

We've got to kill her.

Face it, Tom, she's not human.

She's not your little girl anymore.

If you weren't so obsessed, you'd see that.

Look, mate, if you won't kill her,
then we have to bring her back here.

- Wait, Tom! Let me help you.

- Do what you want!

I'm telling you, you can't stop her
alone! You're gonna get yourself killed.

Miranda?

Miranda!

Senorita, may I do something for you?

I think so.

I must ask you to cover yourself, senorita.

It's okay.

I know. You're like me.

I knew from the beginning.
Miranda?
Miranda.
Senor.
Wow, wow, wow, you scared...
Where's Miranda?
Everything was fine
until you two showed up.
I should have killed you in the alley!
Not so good, you humans.
You don't have to do this.
Genesis 20.
"Behold, thou art but a dead man... "
Your dress, I want it.
- You want my dress?
- Yeah. Take it off.
You know what, I got a better idea.
Why don't you better get out of here
right now, bitch?
Oh! You mean my dress?
Lick my ear.
Yeah, me so like it.
A monster, it killed mi compadre.
Oh, crap. Where'd she go? The monster.
- Over there!
- All right.
Bingo.
Here goes.
Miranda?
Miranda?
The innkeeper was one of mine.
And he was sterile.
Otherwise you'd be pregnant by now.
Turn around.
You have wanted to fuck me since
the moment we met.
Miranda?
Oh, my God.
Where am I?
It's okay. It's okay.
Relax. Relax, Miranda.
Tom...
Lay down.
Tom, I need your help.

Of course. Anything.
You have to end this.
Hang in there. Hang in there.
The human side of me is dying.
And I don't want what's left.
It's over.
You know what you've got to do.
Thanks
for giving me life.
You were right, Miranda.
You were always right.