

Genesis

Aurora regarded the others with trepidation, wondering why the three friends had been lumbered with the older foreigner, Metratron, who always disrupted things. “Team, please, nobody has ever returned from one of these expeditions. We must be careful. Remember; our findings are crucial to our community’s development.”

“You timid University types are all the same.” Replied Ariel. “You should be positive, bold, seize the opportunity.”

“Yes, I agree, but dear Aurora is right, nobody has survived from countless previous investigations for as long as we have records. This is a scientific expedition, and I for one intend to make sure we can return with our results.”

“Mercury, why do you always side with Aurora? Are you trying to split up our team already?”

“Children, children, calm down. I understand your fear and excitement. We know that other tribes have managed successful rides on the flux storms, but they will not tell us about it.”

“But, Metratron, why?”

“We will find out.” It refused to say more, leaving them irritated and unsatisfied.

Slowly the four elemental beings drifted towards the eye of the magnetic storm, adroitly switching from one thermal to the next, carefully husbanding their precious resources, and all the while feeding on the radiation flux sleeting through them and growing in size and intellect.

“The harvest is much richer here, I can feel my being so much more.”

“You always were an egotist Ariel.”

“You cannot hide your beauty now Aurora, no handy ion curtains, just raw flux warming our senses and building our synapses.”

Metratron remained silent, studying its companions, marvelling at their rapid growth. This was important, no wonder its own tribe would not tell these outlanders the secret of the flux fountain. Everyone would want to come here. The world would become overcrowded. It was fortunate then that travel was so slow, drifting between gentle up currents, balancing life in the temperate zone between dissolution in the tenuous outer layer and oblivion far below. There was too much time to become fat and lazy.

Mercury nudged them with a filament, “We are nearly there now, be careful.”

Unexpectedly, the photosphere trembled, a yawning cavern opened wide beneath them and the trapped coronal matter burst forth in a massive superheated flare with the magnetic pulse carrying them far out into the heliosphere.

“Ariel, help! I’m being torn apart!”

“Aurora, I’m sorry, we’re too large, the flux is too strong!”

“Youngsters, this is the great secret.” Metratron gloated in a dying roar. “Did you ever wonder where you came from?”

Mercury realised too late, in the instant of dissolution, that this was the most efficient way to spread their genes.

A million new individuals recombined from the four giants and spread out on the solar wind to disperse among the planets, another million were trapped in the flux current and drawn below the safe photosphere to perish in the coronal furnace below, and just a few were scattered free to romp and play in the gentle photosphere.