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Okay, now that that's done, I present for you, a play in one act:

GENE RODDENBERRY'S ANDROMEDA

"Coda"

A Play in One Act
Written by
Robert Hewitt Wolfe

April 17, 2005

FADE IN:

White letters over black:

"A happy ending?
This one's gonna end with you
spitting blood in their eyes
as they laugh at your smashed open face.
You want happy? Then don't miss."

MAJOR KORGO KORGAR, "The Last of the Lancers" 32 AFC

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OBS LOUNGE - NIGHT

Harper enters the Obs Lounge and finds Trance standing by the railing, looking out at the stars. She's backlit, a little shadowed.

HARPER

Oh. Hey. Sorry. I was just...

TRANCE

Looking for a place to think?

Trance turns around. But to Harper's shock and amazement...

IT'S PURPLE TRANCE

Blonde hair. Purple skin. Pointy prehensile tail.

HARPER

Trance?

TRANCE

Guilty.

HARPER

But what... I mean... you're purple.

TRANCE

Am I?

Harper draws his sidearm and aims it at Trance.

HARPER

Okay! That's it. I'm done.
You're going to explain everything
to me. Right now. Or so help
me...

TRANCE

You'll shoot? Go ahead. If it'll
make you feel better. I don't
mind.

HARPER

No freaking way. You are not doing
this again. You owe me. Spill.

Trance gets a thoughtful look, then...

TRANCE

Why not? What harm would it do?

HARPER

Seriously? You're going to tell me
everything? Who you are? What the
hell has been happening for the
past couple years?

TRANCE

Don't talk me out of it.

HARPER

Okay, okay. Talk. I'm listening.

Harper holsters his gun.

TRANCE

First... can you answer a question
for me?

HARPER

(guarded)
Maybe.

TRANCE

What's the last thing you remember?

HARPER

Err... what do you mean?

TRANCE

What's going on right now? With Dylan and Tyr and Rev and Beka and Rommie. What is the exact situation in which this conversation is taking place?

Harper looks confused.

HARPER

Well Dylan is... uh...
(starts over)
Okay. Tyr. Tyr is...
(crap)
Beka? Rev Bem? What the hell? I don't really... I have no idea. I mean, it's like... freaking hazy.

TRANCE

I was afraid of that.

HARPER

What's wrong with me?

TRANCE

Nothing. Except you're not real.

HARPER

I'm not?

TRANCE

No. You're a probability wave. A possible future Harper.

HARPER

Oh. Errr... so does that mean I don't get an explanation?

TRANCE

No. But I'll have to make it a bit more general. Since I'm not sure which Harper you are.

(serious)

Okay. The first thing you have to understand is that I don't see reality like you do.

HARPER

I know that. You can see the future or whatever.

TRANCE

No. I see possible futures. Even ones that are incredibly, unbelievably unlikely.

HARPER

You know... I can vaguely remember some pretty freaky, crazy stuff happening the last few years. Some place called Seefra?

TRANCE

Yeah. That was unlikely.

HARPER

A little. Are you saying that it never really happened?

TRANCE

I'm saying that it may happen. It's a possibility. There are lots and lots of possibilities. That's what's great about the future. You can change it. Not like the past.

HARPER

So where are you? Right now?

TRANCE

The same place I always am. In the present.

(frowns)

At this moment, I'm trying to decide whether to save you... or let you die and save Hohne.

HARPER

The tesseracting thing.

TRANCE

Yeah.

HARPER

But... you have a tail.

TRANCE

I've always had a tail.

HARPER

Until it got shot off.

TRANCE

Harper, I've come back to life
after being dead. You really think
I can't regrow a tail?

HARPER

You know, you kinda scare me
sometimes.

TRANCE

Sorry.

HARPER

So everything I remember after that
mess with the tesseract... or
everything I don't remember... it's
all just your imagination?

TRANCE

No. It exists. But only in
theory. Like I said... probability
waves. Although... well, the truth
is... I have kinda been...
daydreaming. Letting myself dwell
on more and more unlikely scenarios
in an effort to get an outcome that
was... I don't know... more
appealing than the one I knew
was... well... best.

HARPER

Shouldn't the best future be the
most appealing?

TRANCE

It should. But it wasn't.

Trance reaches up with her tail and strokes Harper's cheek.

TRANCE

Because some people I cared about
were going to get very hurt.

HARPER

Including me?

TRANCE

I've been trying to find a happy
ending where that won't happen.

HARPER

And have you?

TRANCE

No, not really.

Trance looks back out at the stars.

TRANCE

I suppose I should start at the beginning.

HARPER

You, me, Beka, and Rev on the Maru? I can remember that part.

TRANCE

No. The real beginning. The "In the beginning" beginning. Once upon a time, there was matter. And energy. And Love. And Love meant that all the matter and all the energy were all bound very tightly together in one place.

HARPER

Errr... like before the Big Bang?

TRANCE

Exactly. And then something new came along. Something that wasn't Love.

HARPER

Hate?

TRANCE

Worse. Boredom. Some parts of the matter and energy wanted something new. Something different. They became... distinct. Adversarial. In reaction, other individuals arose. Those who wanted Love to continue. Two factions. Who fought a war in Heaven.

HARPER

A war in Heaven? Like angels and devils and stuff?

TRANCE

Exactly.

Harper's got a sneaking suspicion. One he's afraid to confirm, but he can't help himself.

HARPER

Which side were you on?

Trance waves her pointy prehensile tail in front of Harper's face.

TRANCE

The tail is a dead giveaway.
That's why I let them shoot it off.

Harper still can't believe it.

HARPER

A real live devil? Horns?
Pitchfork?

TRANCE

We called ourselves... well, the
best translation is
"Lightbringers." But maybe it's
more accurate to use the Latin.
You know any Latin?

Harper feels his data port.

HARPER

I think I left that chip back in my
quarters.

TRANCE

In Latin, the word for
"Lightbringer" is "Lucifer."

Harper is seriously freaked out.

HARPER

My best friend is the devil.

Trance looks moved.

TRANCE

I'm your best friend? Harper,
that's so sweet.

HARPER

Uh... you're welcome?

TRANCE

So. We fought a war. Against
Love. We won. And when it was
done... we blew up Heaven.

HARPER

The Big Bang?

TRANCE

The Lucifers caused everything to
explode. Energy. Life.
Excitement. The end to boredom.
As the Lucifers blasted the
universe into existence, we
gathered matter and energy around
ourselves. And we burned. Oh, how
we burned.

Trance looks out at the stars. Revealing her tattoo. A sun
with a face.

TRANCE

And we're still burning. Today.

HARPER

Suns.

TRANCE

Suns. Lucifers. Devils.
(a beat)
But Love didn't die in the War.
Love still existed. And Love
wanted to restore Heaven. By
collapsing existence back into
itself.

HARPER

You're saying the Spirit of the
Abyss... is... God?

TRANCE

No. Harper, if there's a God, It's
greater than you or me or the
Abyss. It's beyond all meaning.
All understanding. The Abyss is
just the other side of the coin.
The Lucifers want energy, chaos,
expansion. The Abyss wants
harmony, order, singularity.

HARPER

So on one side... Love. On the
other...

TRANCE

Blowing Things Up.

Trance puts on her best "school teacher" expression.

TRANCE

It's the tension between these two forces... Love on one side and Blowing Things Up on the other that makes everything possible. Except there was a problem. In the end, we knew... Love was going to win. In the End, everything was going to collapse back down into singularity again.

HARPER

And you know that because you can see the future?

TRANCE

No. Because it's happened before. Many times. The Universe explodes into existence, thrives, then collapses back on itself. Everything ends. Eventually, the Lucifers arise again. And everything explodes. Again. Expansion, contraction, expansion, contraction. We even created a device, a way of ensuring that the explosion would always happen. We called it the Engine of Creation.

(concerned)

Are you following all of this?

HARPER

I have no idea. But keep going.

TRANCE

Unfortunately, this time around, Love wasn't willing to wait for the normal dance. Love tried to force the end to come early. And to make sure that there would never be another explosion again. We couldn't have that. So we fought back. We made a plan to annihilate Love. To make sure that the Universe never collapsed again. We incarnated ourselves as avatars, projecting our consciousnesses into fabricated bodies connected to our home suns through the Slipstream.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

Then, as avatars, we used our ability to foresee probabilities and try to force existence to take a different path. And that's where you come in.

HARPER

Me?

TRANCE

You. Dylan. Beka. Tyr. Rev Bem. Andromeda. In our projections, you were six very important people. Separately, you would all do great things. But our projections showed that together, you might do the impossible. Together, you might destroy the Abyss and end the war. It was my job to bring you together. To manipulate you. To make sure you did what was necessary to bring about the best of all possible worlds. The Perfect Possible Future.

Trance shakes her head.

TRANCE

Only... there was a problem. I started to like you.

HARPER

And that's bad?

TRANCE

People who do great things... they don't always enjoy it. The Perfect Possible Future for me and my brothers and sisters... wasn't necessarily the best of all possible worlds for you.

HARPER

(imitating a buzzer)
Buzzzz. Vagueness.

TRANCE

Okay. Specifics. Let's start with Tyr. In the Perfect Possible Future... Tyr Anasazi, out of Victoria, by Barbarossa... becomes the greatest military leader in the universe.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

Using his child as a figurehead, he unites the Nietzscheans. He establishes an Empire. He drives his enemies before him. He hears the lamentations of their women.

HARPER

Man. And Dylan lets him?

TRANCE

Dylan has his own fate. Dylan Hunt, with the help of his legendary ship, the Andromeda Ascendent, re-establishes the Commonwealth. Fear of Tyr and the Magog help him unite the Than, the Perseids, and many others into a great society. Dylan proves himself over and over as a great leader. And eventually he leads his new Commonwealth into a great war against Tyr and Tyr's allies. And then there's Rev...

HARPER

Rev. I miss Rev.

TRANCE

He's happier where he is now. Happier, but not as great.

(a beat)

The Wayist Church hasn't had a Magog leader since it's founding. But Rev Bem... Behemial Fartraveller... in the Perfect Possible Future, he changes all that. Rising to the top of his Church, backed by a fanatical army of Wayist Magog and devoted believers... Rev Bem creates a third great nation. A religious state an equal to both the Commonwealth and the Nietzschean Empire. And then...

She looks to Harper...

TRANCE

The fourth great state arises. Led by... you.

HARPER

Me?

TRANCE

You.

HARPER

I'm just an engineer.

TRANCE

Exactly.

HARPER

All I know are machines.

TRANCE

Yes.

HARPER

Then how...?

TRANCE

The Consensus of Parts.

HARPER

Those freaky machine-thingies? I was supposed to lead them?

TRANCE

No. You were to become them.

(gently)

Bit by bit, in our adventures, you, Harper, lose yourself. Literally. An arm at first. A leg. An eye. In time, you become less a man and more... machine. At the very end, in a battle with the Consensus, when they try to absorb Andromeda and the Commonwealth fleet... you absorb them instead. Your mind, your consciousness, spreads like a virus through the entire Consensus. You cease to exist as a man... and become a nation.

HARPER

Me?

TRANCE

You.

HARPER

So if my mind goes out into the Consensus... my body...?

TRANCE

Dies.

HARPER

Wow.

(a beat)

That... that kinda sucks, honestly.

TRANCE

Yeah. I know.

Trance is actually crying a little. She turns to Harper.

TRANCE

I couldn't do it, Harper. I couldn't create a future where that happened to you. So I tried to find another way. A way that was easier. Happier. More... appealing. Less complicated.

HARPER

You threw out the entire future... for me?

TRANCE

I wanted so badly to save you. There were those... those with even more power than me... that wanted things to be different. They wanted you... eliminated. Right from the start. They wanted me replaced. So a lot of what I did... too much maybe... I did to protect you. To protect me. Beka. Tyr. Rev Bem. I wanted to keep you all safe. Alive.

HARPER

But not Dylan?

TRANCE

In all the possibilities, Dylan was indispensable. He was the chosen of the great powers. He was always going to be there. In some possibilities, he was destined to become truly great. In some, he went mad. In still others, he warped the entire Commonwealth to suit his own ends. But there had to be a Dylan. Without Dylan, nothing was possible. With him...

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

Great things could happen. I tried to make Dylan great. I wanted him to be remembered as the greatest hero of this or any age. You, Beka, Tyr, Rev Bem, me, our very existences were always in question. Rommie was safe. In any scenario, she would always be there, beautiful, deadly, brilliant, loyal. And Dylan... his survival was assured. Whatever happened would begin and end with him. What was always at stake for Captain Dylan Hunt... was his soul. Would he do what was right to achieve his goals? What compromises would he make? What betrayals and at what cost?

Harper is still trying to digest all this. And then he realizes...

HARPER

Beka. You haven't said what happens to Beka.

TRANCE

Beka.

Trance shakes her head sadly.

TRANCE

The Perfect Possible Future... was always in the hands of Beka.

HARPER

Beka... I always thought Dylan...

TRANCE

Dylan is crucial. Dylan is the catalyst. And the heart. But at the final crisis point... the final decision... it all comes down to Beka. And the Engine of Creation.

HARPER

The Big Bang Machine? The reset button for the Universe?

TRANCE

Beka is obsessed with the Engine. Because she knows it can change... everything. With the Engine, she could remake reality.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

Work miracles. Right wrongs. She could make her brother safe. Find her mother. Even bring her father back to life. So in the Perfect Possible Future, Beka locates the many parts of the Engine. She puts them together. She recreates the Engine of Creation.

HARPER

And lives happily ever after?

TRANCE

No. Because the Engine wants to be used. It becomes part of her. It literally melds with her. And makes her... like a god. But the more she uses that power... to bring Ignatius Valentine back to life, to fix the Andromeda when the ship gets torn apart... to resurrect an entire world, the more she loses herself. And the more the Engine tempts her to fix... everything. To crunch the Universe back down to a singularity, then start all over again. War. Explosion. Love and Blowing Things Up. The entire dance.

HARPER

So how's it end?

TRANCE

There's a terrible war. Dylan and the Commonwealth against Tyr and Nietzscheans at first. Then you, the Consensus. Rev. The Wayists. And then you're all swept into an even bigger war. Between the Magog backed by the Abyss. And the Pyrians backed by the Lucifers. With the help of you, Tyr, Rev and Rommie, Dylan manages to unite all the forces arrayed against him into one unified front. The Commonwealth is reborn, but now it includes the Nietzscheans, the Wayists and the Consensus. He even forces the Vedrans out of hiding. With his friends and allies at his side, Dylan comes to aid the Pyrians in their fight against the Abyss. But it's not enough.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

The Abyss is too strong. So Dylan realizes, the only way to win is to destroy the Abyss. And the only one who can do that... is Beka.

HARPER

So Beka takes on the Abyss?

TRANCE

The seven of us are reunited for one last mission. In a heroic journey, against impossible odds, Dylan takes us on the Andromeda to a place in the Slipstream where everything began and everything will end. The singularity. There, while Dylan and you and Tyr and Rev and Rommie and I battle endless waves of horrifying foes, Beka confronts the Abyss. In the original plan, the plan I was supposed to make come true, Beka kills the Abyss... But I stopped believing that was the best outcome. So instead, in the Perfect Possible Future, Beka realizes something...

Trance frowns.

TRANCE

If she destroys the Abyss, the balance will be broken. The tension between Chaos and Order, Life and Death, Expansion and Contraction, will end. But if she lets the Abyss win, everyone she knows and loves will die. And neither of those endings are really all that great. So instead, she does the only thing she can do. She loves.

Trance gets a distant look.

TRANCE

She loves you all already. Like a mother and a sister and a daughter and a wife. So she expands that love. She learns to love the conflict. She learns to love the peace. She learns to love all of creation. Every part of it, good and bad. Even the broken places.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

And then... she embraces the Abyss.
And becomes it.

HARPER

Beka becomes God?

TRANCE

I told you, the Abyss isn't God.
What Beka becomes is Love. But
more than Love. Because Beka
understands that Love isn't enough.
That pain and conflict and struggle
are part of life, too. Beka
becomes... everything. And
everything can't war with itself.
So the war... ends.

HARPER

And Beka... what? Dies?

TRANCE

Apotheosizes. Technically. But
yes, Beka as you know her... ceases
to exist.

HARPER

That is seriously freaky.

TRANCE

It's as freaky as it gets.

HARPER

And the rest of us?

TRANCE

It's hard to say. In some
versions, some live, others die.
In others, others live, some die.
If you die, you die so others might
live. And if you live, you do so
because others have died. There is
no victory without blood. No birth
without pain. But no matter how it
resolves... one thing is always the
same.

HARPER

I get laid? Tell me I get laid.

TRANCE

Better. You become a legend. You
all do. We all do. Captain Dylan
Hunt, Captain Beka Valentine.

(MORE)

TRANCE(cont'd)

Tyr Anasazi, the Emperor of the Nietzscheans. The Reverend Behemial, Voice of the Way. Seamus Zelanzy Harper, the Soul of the Machine. Trance Gemini, Lucifer, Solar Avatar... troublemaker. And the Andromeda Ascendent, the greatest, the most powerful, the most beautiful and the most sarcastic starship that ever sailed the Slipstream. And for generations, our exploits live on in memory, serving as an example and an inspiration to all who hear the tale. The end.

Harper thinks about it for a long moment.

HARPER

You know... that doesn't suck.

TRANCE

Seriously?

HARPER

I mean, I get it. I die. More or less. Beka dies. Kinda. And maybe you or Tyr or Rev dies. Maybe even Dylan dies. But it's all worth it. It's all for something. And that's what matters, right?

TRANCE

It's not the easiest way, Harper. It's not the prettiest... or the simplest... It may not even be a way that, in the end, everyone understands. Sometimes it's funny. Sometimes it's sad. But it's also complicated, and messy, and loud.

HARPER

But it's not boring. And that's the only things worse than hate, right? Boredom?

TRANCE

(smiles)

It's never boring.

Harper shakes his head.

HARPER

So now what?

TRANCE

What do you mean?

HARPER

Now that we've had our talk,
what...? I cease to exist? This
little possible future ends and you
start the real thing?

TRANCE

Right now, there is no real thing,
Harper. Right now there are only
possibilities. Illusions. Stories
that may or may not have any
meaning. I've laid out one, the
one that I can see clearest. But
there are limitless others.
Whatever you can imagine might
happen... might happen. And who
knows... what you imagine might be
even better than my Perfect
Possible Future. Who am I to say
that my way is right and yours is
wrong?

HARPER

Trance. You're Trance. You always
were.

Trance turns and gives Harper a kiss on the cheek. It's
tender, simple, and speaks volumes.

TRANCE

Whatever happens... I'm glad it
happened at all. I'm glad I got to
play in this world. I'm glad I got
to know you all. It's been...
well, it's been a hell of a ride.
And I wouldn't have missed it for
the world.

HARPER

Me neither.

Harper doesn't know what to say next.

HARPER

I guess I should go. You know...
so I can cease to exist and you can
decide how it all ends.

But Trance places her tail on Harper's shoulder and looks out at the stars.

TRANCE

Not yet. Stay with me for a little while more. And just... look at the stars.

Harper considers everything he's just heard, and then...

HARPER

Look at the stars? I can do that.

Harper turns toward the endless starscape and he and Trance consider... well... everything.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

EXT. SPACE - ANDROMEDA ASCENDENT

We see, in all its glory, the Andromeda Ascendant, the greatest, the most powerful, the most beautiful starship ever. As it turns. And crackles with energy. And...

JUMPS TO SLIPSTREAM

And then it's gone. And then:

WHITE LETTERS OVER BLACK

One more quote. For old time's sake:

"The poem is never done.
The music never ends.
Not so long as you remember the words.
Not so long as echoes remain."

ULATEMPA POETESS, "Rhythms" CY 9825

And on this we...

FADE OUT.

THE END