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Featuring
Dean F. Wilson

Unnoticed Adventures

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"We're descended from aliens," Matthew said, jumping up and down excitedly in front of the TV screen.

"That's nice, dear," his mother said from behind a women's magazine.

"Did you hear me?" Matthew said. "Did you hear?"

"Yes, dear," his mother said. "We're descended from aliens."

"But do you know what that *means*?"

"Oh yes, definitely, dear," she said, peeping over the magazine to give a brief smile. "It means we're the descendants of aliens."

"No! It...well, yes, but...but it's bigger than that. It's like...*revolutionary*. You know, something that will change our whole perception—like that Copperknickers guy, the one who discovered the world was round."

"Oh yes, dear—the world *is* round."

"I know *that*! That's not what I was...oh, never mind."

Matthew turned the TV off and sauntered off to his room. The truth was, he knew, that his mother had always taken him for a kid with a great imagination. At eight years of age, of course, there was no denying that. However, she often thought he came up with wild and fanciful ideas—*fantasies*, even, and undoubtedly she thought this was one of them.

But it wasn't. It had just been broadcast that the scientists working on the Human Genome Project had made a major breakthrough on the 97% of supposedly "junk" cells that the human genome carried; they discovered they were alien genes, that our survival on a paltry 3% of our gene structure was an anomaly in the aliens' genetic plans gone wrong (though right for us). Indeed, it meant that we were more alien than human, though

dormantly so, and even if the aliens had long died out, Matthew was excited by the very fact that it was now proven that they existed, and not only *existed*, but actually interacted with and, indeed, helped to *create*, humanity.

Matthew had always suspected as much before, of course. His baby sister, for one. He always thought she looked like an alien: huge egg-shaped head and big bulging eyes staring out at him as if he were another species. He even suspected that the strange gurgling noises she made were interstellar transmissions that would make sense to some strange race halfway across the galaxy.

He opened the door of his room and walked in. Techman, his robotic toy (or, as Matthew called him, *friend*) was sitting on his bed, staring out the window.

"Hello, Matthew," he said, his voice hoarse and disjointed. His head swivelled around to look at him.

"Hi, Techman. What are you up to?"

"I was looking out of your window," the robot recited, ending the words with a tiny beep. "I was looking at the sky."

"Sometimes I look at the sky," Matthew said, staring at it now. "But it can make you dizzy if you do it too long—especially if you're standing up."

"It does not make me dizzy," Techman said. "It makes me curious."

"What about?"

"Aliens," the robot said, flashing the bulbs that were his eyes.

"That's weird. I just watched the news about aliens. Well, about us and our genes and how we're actually related to them, or descended from them at least."

"Yes," Techman said. "I heard it."

"Mom didn't listen when I told her about it," Matthew said, sulking. "As usual. She got that magazine yesterday and she's *still* reading it. She had it on the table at breakfast and she was doing a crossword, only talking to me to ask what the capital of Peru was, and she had it when she was cooking dinner, turning her spoon with one hand and turning the page with the other, and then at the dinner table, and now after dinner she's rereading one of the articles in the living room!"

"She likes magazines," Techman told him. Techman was an especially observant and truthful robot, Matthew thought. Often he would get Matthew into a lot of trouble if his mother demanded the truth about something (like who broke the vase or who ate all the sweets) as he seemed incapable of lying. Matthew tried on several occasions to get the robot to understand what a "white lie" was, but it always "failed to compute."

"You know, I bet if I put a tape of me talking in the room with her, she'd never even notice I wasn't there. She'd just say *Yes, dear* and *That's nice, dear*, and *This article on lipstick is so much more interesting than talking to you, dear*. Why does she even want lipstick anyway? She's not going out with anyone." He paused and bit his lip. "And dad's gone. I bet he would have listened to me about the aliens. I told him once that I met an alien a few years ago who told me about the stars, and he got out his old telescope and we spent the whole night looking out into space..."

"I spent all night looking into space," Techman said.

"I didn't see you. I thought you turn yourself off at night."

"No, I do not turn off at night like you. I often look into space and try to calculate the number of planets and stars and galaxies there. I never finish counting them by the time you turn back on again."

"Wow. How many did you count last night?"

"None."

"None at all?"

"I did not count last night. I listened."

"Listened to what?"

"The aliens."

"You mean, like, the news?"

"Yes," Techman said. "I heard it. I heard them speaking to the scientists. They didn't *discover* the alien genes—they were *discovered* by the aliens, who told them about the genes. I heard them. I heard them speak from space."

"Really? Wow, that's amazing! I always knew they were real. Mom said I must have ate something funny and was having fever dreams, but I *saw* them."

"So did I," Techman said, beeping again. His head swivelled around to the window and he raised one robotic arm to point at it. "One was here last night, standing outside."

"I thought I heard something last night, but when I woke up this morning I thought it must have been a dream. Do you think they will come back? Do you think they'll come again tonight?"

"Yes," Techman said. "I was told they would."



Matthew's excitement kept him up for half the night, and when he eventually went to bed, he could not sleep. He twisted and turned in his bed, one minute too warm, another too cold—all the while thinking about the aliens and being brought into space to see the stars. When he eventually

began to doze off, there was a gentle tap on his window. He heard the soft hum of Techman turning his head, and then a series of short beeps like Morse code. Matthew sat up, clutching the blanket in both hands. The room was dark, but moonlight was streaming in the window, casting shadows on the floor. He could see the shadow of a figure there, standing still. He clambered to the bottom of his bed to get a better view, still holding the blanket firm in his hands; at the window was a dark silhouette with pale eyes flashing to the rhythm of the robot's beeps.

"He wants to know if he can come in," Techman said.

Matthew was afraid. He wanted to meet an alien again, and he wanted to talk to this one and visit space, but the dark figure at the window scared him. It reminded him of the monsters in his nightmares, all black shadow and just standing there, watching him. The crisp voice of Techman gave him comfort.

"He says he has limited time."

"Yes," Matthew said. "He can come in."

Techman beeped once, receiving a flash of the alien's eyes in return.

The lock on the window clicked open and the window opened on its own. Matthew had never seen anything like it. He hugged the blanket in his arms and dared not blink, lest he miss something. The alien stretched its long thin legs through the window and bent its back, entering as if it were doing a limbo. It stood up tall and turned to Matthew and Techman. Its eyes flashed.

"He said his name will not translate to your language, but you may call him the nearest approximate: *Guide*. He has been sent to gather people that his species has visited before and bring them to see the stars. He says the Earth is dying and humanity needs to plan its evacuation over the next three

centuries, starting now with the people chosen to see the stars. They will be *emissaries*, acting on behalf of both species, and will help find a suitable planet for humanity to move to."

The alien looked at him and seemed to smile, though there was no discernable mouth to smile with. It held out its hand, waiting for Matthew to take it. Its eyes flashed again.

"He said you need not fear," Techman translated. "You will be safe with him and will return within a week's time with the others, and you may choose not to travel again after this first time if you do not wish to." The alien smiled again. "He promises that you *will* wish to," Techman added.

"Can Techman come?" Matthew asked.

"Yes," Techman said. "You will need me to translate."

Matthew smiled, let the blanket go, and grabbed the alien's hand. It pulled him forward, out of the bed and pointed out the window. "He said the moon is out, which is a good omen for travelling the black sea of space. The moon is the beacon of those waters." The alien turned and patted Matthew on the head.

And Matthew was asleep then, wrapped up warmly in bed, his head brimming with ideas and plans for his space travels.

He awoke the following morning to the sight of the sun beaming into his room. He yawned, stretched his arms and suddenly remembered the events of the night before.

"It was real," Techman said. "It was not a dream."

"Will he be back?"

"Yes, he will be back tonight to collect us. He made you sleep and put you back to bed. He said you needed rest for the journey ahead and would

not sleep normally. He said you need to pack your things soon, though you will not need much, as they will provide for you."

He found his mother in the kitchen with a new magazine and a dictionary; she was halfway through the crossword already. Cereal was ready in a bowl for him, and his sister Mia was busy playing with her spoon.

"It's 1 o'clock!" Matthew said as he entered the room and saw the time.

"Yes, dear," his mother said. "It's Saturday and I heard you twisting and turning all night, so I decided not to wake you."

"You heard? Did you, like...did you hear everything?"

"Everything, dear? I heard Techman snoring if that's what you mean."

Techman, who had followed Matthew into the room, glowered at her (in as much as a robot can glower; his eyes shone a fiercer red). "I do not snore," he said.

"Then it must have been you, dear," she said, looking at Matthew.

"I don't snore either! I bet it was Mia."

"Umm," she said, tapping her pen off the table. "You should know this. What's the name of a commander of an English-Russian space station?"

"I don't know," Matthew said, letting the milk on his spoon drip back into his bowl. "I might know in the future, though." He ate his cereal slowly, thinking about what he'd need to pack as he told his mother the answers he knew for her crossword. By the time he was finished, she had turned several pages and was deep into reading a lengthy article.

"I'm going off to another planet for a few days," he told her, grabbing his bag and stuffing it with his hat, scarf and gloves. "It might be cold, so I better take these. Did you hear me? I'm going off to another planet," he repeated.

"That's nice, dear," she said, turning another page.



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Dean F. Wilson lives in Dublin, Ireland, where he is currently a student of Audio Visual Media. In his spare time, he writes poetry, short stories, and novels of various genres. He is currently editing his first novel, a fantasy entitled *Protos Mythos: Dawn of the Dark Age*, for release in 2008 or 2009. For more info, check < www.deanfwilson.com >.



Cover: "Fairy & the Baby Dragon"

Friends in the fey lands, the butterfly fairy and the baby dragon enjoy a quiet moment.

A colored pencil illustration on Strathmore Artagain paper depicting a serene butterfly fairy and her baby dragon friend.

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Specializing in colored pencil works on fiber-enhanced paper, more of the work of Michelle J.A. McIntyre can be found on her Webpage, < www.fantasyrealmcreations.com >. She creates a variety of fantasy art subject matter including dragons, unicorns, gryphons, fairies, and centaurs.



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