

Meaning

Long ago, humanity was in dispute. The Scientists sought to automate all things, bringing order and efficiency to society. The Artists wanted to let chaos reign, dancing by fires as they created without purpose. Unable to solve their conflict, they split apart, forming two tribes which left to seek their destiny.

The Scientists built machines which farmed their food and transported their goods. It did not stop there. They built mechanical shops to sell their produce, and delivery networks to deliver supplies where they were needed. Drones and automata were constructed to perform the tasks of humans, and vast machines shot up into the heavens. They made leaping advances in medicine, and cured all disease by keeping people in isolation, communicating using holograms and audio streams instead. They cured death.

It was not efficient though; their bodies still demanded food and medicine. So, the line between man and machine blurred until it was no more. Now society ran on the cold efficiency of electricity. The edges of their great cities crumbled away, as the farms and factories of old were no longer needed. Their population was too great as well; if there were fewer people, the humans would not consume so much energy. So they merged with each other, and over many centuries, became one.

Now the last Scientist stood on the side of the Earth left barren and desolate by their own. Their society had been reduced to just a single machine, humanoid in form, but it could be made more efficient still; there was never truly any need for the machine in the first place. Before making that one final optimization though, the last Scientist's thoughts turned back to the beginning of their era.

Struggling through the rain, the Scientist came across a great clearing, lush with greenery and filled with strange and wonderful objects. People gathered around them, and the Scientist spoke: "We are no more; I seek knowledge from you, the Artists; how have you managed to stay so resilient whilst we have fallen? What meaning do you have, that you shan't be optimized out of reality?"

One of the people from the Artist tribe looked into the waterlogged lens of a machine which once might have been their sibling. "There is no meaning to our actions. We don't care."