Extended Edition

The Quest For Humanity



JANI HEINO

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The Fells
The Village
HYPERBOREANIA
THE LAND OF ICE AND SNOW
Mt Arcturos
THE TWO RAVENS
Wrangulia
THE LAND WHERE THE SUN NEVER SETS
North Harbor
Sacred Lake
THE HIGHLANDS
The Deep Forests
Cyberian Wetlands
Monastery
The Bridgehead
Tartarian Riverlands
WESTLANDIA
CYBERIA
The High Command
Mt Siber
Cyberian Drylands
Southern Forests
The Steppes
Cyberian Highlands
MONCIA
THE ENDLESS DESERT
THE HIGH MOUNTAINS
Desertia
Monastery

FOREWORD

It has been a struggle. And it has been a recurring theme ever since I began writing *The Quest For Humanity*. It seemed like it was impossible to leave the story alone, to let it just be as is or, in other words, as it should be. There was the problem of not being satisfied with the story. Two editions were published, yet I was not satisfied with the end result. Therefore, an extended edition of The Quest For Humanity is now ready.

My personal story of writing the first edition was strange, so lets go back in 2024. As a trained field biologists, I used to visit a particular stream site, situated within a small protected area, several times over the summer and the autumn. While visiting the stream, I was taking photos and recording videos of autumnal leaves entering the stream and how they, after falling into the stream channel, would behave there. But, yes, this was not supposed to be an essay on the ecology of forest streams, or how the allochthonous matter entering the stream pretty much fuels the entire ecosystem. Neither was my visit to the particular stream site meant to evolve into a fantasy story, yet it did, for reasons still partly unknown to me. It is hard to explain how it happened or how it occurred to me, yet here I am on my journey to develop a series of fantasy stories. A saga to come maybe. Perhaps it happened during or after so-called gnosis, where everything just appears to be clear in one's mind immediately.

The story was first published online at Substack, individual chapters typically appearing a couple of times in a week from 2024 through to 2025. In March 2026, the first edition of The Quest For Humanity was ready to be sent to the publishers. The first edition included original artwork to guide the reader to The Earth's Plane, how the characters would look like, what kinds of environments they were visiting, and so on. It is indeed true that a picture is worth more than a thousand words, which was true in this case, too. Not blessed or skilled with the ability to draw or paint, I used artificial intelligence (AI) program to create the artwork preceding each chapter. It did work in the end, yet it required some time playing with the prompts to end up with the individual characters as I thought they should look like. Moreover, as a serious nature enthusiast myself, I of course must include lots of reality when using the prompts to describe the environments of The Earth's Plane. They should look natural enough, yet as this was supposed to be an imaginary world, I left some room for wild imagination and artistic freedom in some cases.

Just as a side note here, I do not support using AI in general, though. My personal opinion is that it does bear promise in delivering fast summaries of a given topic, yet the source material should be considered trustworthy. Sadly, when it comes to source material, especially if directly detrieved from the Internet, the opposite is the case. This said, with reasonable use, AI may be useful, but it should not be let to rule our own thoughts or limit our creative potential as human beings.

Here, I take the preceding paragraph as a bridge back to the story of The Quest For Humanity. An overarching question of the story revolves around the following idea. If we were given free will, how are we going to express it? Are we going to be led by the others toward evil deeds and miserable ends or, alternatively, do we use our free will to do something that is good as a whole? The issue is emphasized with the use of AI. Do you let it, or its masters hiding in the digital technoshadows, direct you toward a certain direction, be that direction wrong or right? In the story of The Quest For Humanity, one group of entities is indeed using artificial, synthetic approaches to change everything that should be considered natural, organic. Here, even if The Quest For Humanity is considered fiction, it aims at discussing the very idea of being an organic human being and whether it is completely wrong to change human beings to something that is synthetic at best. You have been granted free will, so it is your choice, or at the very least, it should be your own choice. Some evil forces think differently, which is the case both in The Quest For Humanity and, sadly, also in our real world at large.

The third edition of the novel is an extended version of the original story, incorporating some corrections and new longer passages that were deemed to be important bridges to additional stories that were riping during the writing of the second and third editions. The additional stories that are currently under writing are tentatively called 'The Dark Realm of War and Chaos', 'The Perils of The Great Omnicatastrophe', 'The New Beginning', 'The Black Magicians of Nanopolis' and 'The Forgotten Legends of

Hyperboreania'. They will be set in the same universe as the novel you have at hand right now. While the new stories are being written and polished, please enjoy the extended version of The Quest For Humanity.

Jani Heino

November, 2026

Part I:

The War To End All Wars

PROLOGUE

When will the tide turn

When will the fog of war disappear

Draining the endless swamp is ahead

More stones to turn around emerge

Horrible creatures surface

Chimeras were revealed

Skeletons in the abyss came into the light

Revealing their crimes

Their crimes I see now

Now I recall

And I will never forget

For the generations to follow us, they should know it all

Chapter One

THE SEER'S WARNING



The Earth's Plane was a world that was to be in turmoil soon, and it was not the first time that a major war was about to begin there. It was the realm of war and chaos, where love and hate collided, often with sad and miserable consequences. It was the world that

had suffered from wars inflicted by The Forces of Darkness for eons. And the upcoming war, the war that was supposed to end all wars, proved to be something else. It proved to be more than an ordinary war, as it was not only about conquering peoples and their lands, but a more hideous plan was hidden in the shadows of the underworld. It was war on consciousness, whereby capturing the souls of human beings were to be the ultimate price. For he who controls the souls of human beings will ultimately control all the universes.

Across all the universes there was one law that was above the others. It was The Law of Free Will. All human beings, as well as other sentinent beings, were provided with free will as per granted by Source, or where everything begins and where everything ends. Source was a mystery to many, as was The Grand Game of Source, where all sentinent beings were participating, whether or not they themselves wanted to be part of the game.

Many friends and allies, as well as personal foes and more formidable enemies, were thrown to the path of human beings, especially those with special skills and abilities, or those who possessed something that was considered a birthright. Especially those born of noble parents from hidden bloodlines and being descendants of an ancient civilization were hunted by The Forces of Darkness. At an early age, such human beings learnt that their lives were to be something that could not be described clearly. Whether their lives were to become a struggle, they could not know. Whether they would meet other human beings that were good at heart and with pure souls, they could not tell either. Time will tell,

they often thought, and often it really did. After overcoming many tests and challenges, they finally realized who they were, where they came from, and where they belonged to.

And, in the end, home is where the heart is, both literally and figuratively. The Seer of The Highlands knew it, too.

In the midst of the misty mountains of The Highlands, a small gathering of people was noticed by a lone raven that was flying across a small opening hidden within the mountain forest. The raven saw that they were but men who obviously had some personal things to settle. Perhaps it was a family meeting, or perhaps the gathering was for a notification that the autumn equinox meant shorter days and longer nights, as well as preparation for a long winter arriving soon. The raven thought it was not of his business to interfere, and he flew up toward the treeless mountain top.

The Spruce Clan's stronghold was built on the highest mountain of all the castles of The Highlands. Robert Spruce, the leader of the Spruce clan, was a righteous man who had resisted all forms of evil, both evil men and different evil entities, for his entire life, just like his ancestors had done before him. Today, he had summoned the elders and the swordmasters of the Spruce Clan to hear the Seer's forecasts. The Seer herself had left The Highlands one day before because the sights had been too much to bear. No soul knew where the Seer had gone.

“Aye, listen to me, my fellow clansmen”, Robert Spruce began, “The Seer felt her stream of consciousness severely disturbed. Her sights were horrible, beyond what she could stand for long. She fled, sadly, and no one knows where she went. Poor sister of mine. She saw that the enemy was within our borders, those hideous creatures, beasts and half-men, were wreaking havoc everywhere. Shields were smashed, swords were broken, and blood was shed. Many good men fell, along with countless beasts and half-men, whose blood was no longer red but had turned something different, something that could not be described. Women and children were horribly tortured and brutally killed. Yet the enemy kept amassing their armies…”.

With sadness in his eyes Robert Spruce continued: “The Seer has always been right; her visions have always been more than mere hints only. Yet, she had never seen anything like this before. I must hence ask you not only listen to me carefully but also hear me clearly. Must we defend our lands and save our souls, fight we must. United must we stand. No soul can lose heart in what is to come. This means that we must be prepared for war, a war that will be nothing like we ever have witnessed during our lives and times on The Earth’s Plane”.

Remaining quiet, the three elders of the Spruce Clan nodded admittingly, while the swordmasters seemed worried, despite them having been participating in numerous battles and larger campaigns before. None of them had seen anything like what was to come. They started preparing and training the warriors under their command to face the worst that could be expected, yet they

The Quest For Humanity Saga begins

What if the quest for humanity is deciphering the battles small, or battles within us, and the battles large, or battles beyond us? This epic story deals with the madness of war and the eternal clash between good and evil, examining the very question of what makes us human beings.

Situated in a fantasy world called The Earth's Plane, the story begins with a great war that was supposed to end all wars, followed by exploration of the secrets hidden in this strange world and beyond. This is also a story of a few heroines and heroes who face tests and challenges, overcoming of which facilitates understanding of their own humanness, who and what they are, and which role they play in the Grand Game of Source.

While the story is set in a world that is undergoing the greatest change ever imagined, it also is the story of Hilla of the Northerners. Hilla has had a strange childhood, yet despite all sadness and obstacles in her life, she will finally learn who she is and where she comes from. She learns about her real roots while, at the same time, she is fighting enemies known and unknown to humankind before. She also crosses paths with benevolent beings and forces that guide her toward her final quest, the quest that is shared by all human beings.

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