

**A.S. 2020- 2021**

**V classico A**

## **The relativity of perfection**

Michael Webb was working in his laboratory. It was 3 am, Jack Dayton, his assistant, had already left and he was alone with his thoughts. His eyes were filled with tiredness, his face carried the indistinguishable look of someone whose fatigue was quickly overcoming his mind... but he knew, deep down, that he was on the verge of discovering something revolutionary, which no other scientist of Capitol City had ever thought of: a DNA machine capable of mutating genetic characteristics in humans.

Thanks to this incredible device, Michael Webb could have fulfilled his greatest wish: to be able to make all individuals living on Earth genetically perfect, just like him and all the inhabitants of Capitol City. In the city, people lived in luxury and well-being, they enjoyed life and were educated, but one condition was necessary if you wanted to be part of that world: to have blue blood, just as if you came from a family of noble origins. If you were not born with this "privilege", not only you were not considered a perfect being, but you were locked up in districts in the outskirts of the city, where you had no access to education and you lived in poverty and solitude.

Michael was enthusiastic and he could not believe that in a matter of hours his biggest dream would finally come true! He called his assistant and said, "Jack, tell everyone that I, Michael Webb, have invented the most ingenious machine in all of history!" He laughed as he pronounced these words, so much was the joy he felt in thinking about how much fame and wealth he would earn with this discovery. Later he added: "One more thing! Please, communicate that from tomorrow the *reluctant* savages of the districts will be able to come to me for genetic transformation".

Within a few months, all the inhabitants of the districts moved to the city and started a new life, having changed the color of their blood from red to blue. The scientist became even richer and adored by everyone, both blue-blooded humans and newcomers to the city. But just when everything seemed to be going smoothly, on April 20, 2100, an unforeseen event happened: all of his newly created citizens were having some sort of disease... most of them were in extreme pain and some of them even turned into beings that could simply be described as "walking bodies". A genetic virus infected all the inhabitants of the city, transforming them in real monsters. They were tired, carried sunken faces, pitch-black eyes like the bottom of a well, dry and greyish skin, veins of the body that could be glimpsed under the skin and an unsettling hoarse voice like nothing ever heard before.

Confused as to why his patients were experiencing such terrible faiths, Michael locked himself in his laboratory for weeks looking for an answer. After two months of experimentation he found out that there was something odd in the patient's DNA: someone had tampered with it, to the point where it would allow horrible mutations to happen in the bodies along the years. But who could've done such a thing? Who could've been so cruel and so greedy?

The answer was right in front of him: his own assistant, who had been working alongside him for almost decades, was lying dead on his chair. On his lap was a note that read: "Dear Michael, if you're reading this then it's safe to say that you have finally decided to leave that lab of yours... maybe you even found an antidote to the toxin that I injected so many years ago in the test tubes. Oh whatever... it's too late now. As of now it's been two months since you entered that lab, have you not seen the news? Have you not looked out of the window? Everyone's dead. There's no stopping this plague. You were always like this... always too focused to notice what was around you. But let's be honest: your project was doomed from the beginning. What did you think you could do?"

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Overthrow the new order? Establish social equality? How naive! I bet you're wondering why I did this to you and to everyone else. I was paid by the overlords to sabotage you. But it all went wrong, we messed with nature... and nature has a very dark sense of humor. You could say that there was something else plaguing humanity even before that virus or whatever it is kicked in: greed. And, in the end, humanity was destroyed by itself. And you and I were the cause of it. As you can see, I have already dealt with my guilt. I am not proud of what I did... this is the end of the line Mikey, goodbye”.

Thus, Mike did just what the note said: he looked out the window and he saw hordes of lifeless human “shells” walking aimlessly on the roads below. He fell to his knees and cried... all he ever wanted was to do good to his people, but even generosity and the willingness to dream for a better future come at a heavy price. Desperate and lonely, he decided that there was no point in even trying to save the human race, for, even if he did, it would only lead to another greedy humanity that would, sooner or later, consume itself as it has done before. So, with a last breath, he took his own life. Nobody even heard him, nobody cared... for no one was concerned about it.

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