

## AMBER GALACTIC

« What is it ?

- Something you do not even imagine.
- What does it do?
- It changes your perception of the world ... »

The “Underground” ... She remembers so well the first time she crossed the threshold. She remembers who she was before that night. And who she became, after. After this meeting that gave meaning to her existence. Giving her that thirst for something still undefined. An unquenchable thirst. Today, for one more time... She's again ready to cross the entry made of thin dusting of neoplasma. A breath... Then a step. Amber crosses the soft wall, and then, she's sucked by the vortex, engulfed, unstructured, and propelled through the glittering corridors at full speed. In the twilight of this 21st century, when there is no more "land" to tread, penetrate in this "Underground" has something paradoxical. But Amber plays with paradoxes. Her mind is turned towards one and only idea: penetrate the Milky Way Cyberlibrary's whole mystery. The Cyberlibrary... the only receptacle of collective and individual memories.

First levels already keep no secrets for her. It's easy for her to cross them and go deeper, to explore the following strata. She quickly sweeps the levels of Chemical Composition of Inert Matter and the Living Being, Cells, DNA, Atom... Reached at the AI level, she arms herself with caution. She knows too well that around there, the “trackers” are on the lookout. Quickly, Amber detects two of them. Burning shadows trying to make their way to her. However, she cleverly manages to rise the mark of the fifth level (the Knowledge) before they reach her, and continues her descent. In the past, she would have lingered over the level of Human Spirit and its Artificial Recomposition. But today, she wants to probe lower. She wants to go back there. In this "elsewhere". She slows down, concentrates. Then, the familiar little glow appears. She turns to it. She just has to follow it to penetrate the place.

Customary dematerialization... Few seconds are enough to recover her mind and to move free in this parcel of the “Underground”. There, at the very back of the room, stands the shape of the “Watcher”. She knows. He's not waiting for anyone. So, he doesn't show any surprise. Sitting cross-legged, eyes wide open, lost in the contemplation of an imperceptible landscape, he does little more than ask her to sit down. A long silence follows. Not oppressive. Quite the reverse. Light, as if the air was loaded with fine and exhilarating particles.

"You have to be careful Amber. Eve and Jarta roam around.

- They will not come down here. You scare them. I do not worry about them.
- Are you ready for the final step?
- Yes. I want to understand.
- Understand what led your peers to create so devoid creatures like you? Good. So, open your mind and receive this knowledge »

Then, “Watcher” extends his arm and opens his hand. In the palm of his hand, Amber recognizes the vaporous sphere. A Stream. But of exceptional brilliance. She observes it unfold gradually, grow, surround her like a cloud of mist, penetrate her. She closes her eyes and questions the “Watcher”.

" What is it ?

- Something you do not even imagine.
- What does it do ?

- It changes your perception of the world ...
- How is this Steam called?
- Desire. "

Rejected at the borders of the unspeakable, Amber feels helpless against the flowing flame that submerged her. Her irregular breath echoes the disordered beatings of her heart as her mind explodes into a myriad of tumultuous injunctions. Sensitive sensors scrambled, indecipherable stimuli: control of her body avoid her in a new confusion, even more exciting than all what she provided by hers past illegal incursions.

"Watcher, what's happening to me?"

"You are now trapped by what Earthicides called "Desire".

-This notion is inconsistent: I feel that an incredible strength made me invincible while my body became an unbearable void.

-You are in withdrawal. "Desire" is a constantly renewed impulse, it can drive you crazy if you resist it too long.

-Can you free me from "Desire"?"

-No. The Stream that has invaded you is the most powerful of all. To quench this eternal thirst, you will have to love.

-What does "love" mean?

-To know the meaning of "love", you will have to find a soul which will conceive towards you the same desire as you.

-But which soul would want to interact with me? Who will I "love" in this world where no one has ever heard or uttered that word ?

-Me.

-But, "Watcher", I don't want to share my desire with yours!

- Idiot!

-What ... How dare you pronounce one of the Proscribed Words? What's wrong with you daring to break one of the Twenty Taboos of the Lex?

-I gave you the most beautiful secret of proto-humanity and you pretend to refuse me? You are not better than others!

-Others ? I'm not the first?

The last syllable is swallowed by the sinister sneer of the "Watcher". A terrible grin worsens now his face.

"The Underground". Whose name sounds like a nerve, a nasty black humor touch. What about the concept of underground, when there is no more ground to dig to hide its secrets? When the word "secret" itself is for now an abstraction in this universe of absolute mastery? Yet, Amber came here, defying the "Lex" that ruled her birth.

A few years before her birth, the War of the Streams was raging on Earth. The dictatorship of the GAFAs had led the earthlings to shut and isolate themselves. Then, to dematerialize, little by little, all that composed them, until their own emotions : from that moment, emotions were expressed only as Streams. But Streams unleashed without restraint through all the channels, aimlessly and endlessly, with unheard-of violence. Equal as a nuclear reactor racing, the servers of the so powerful Silicone Valley were soon unable to drain the phenomenal wave of unstructured passions that poured into them. Madness had seized the souls, leading them to the point of no return. And everything has imploded. Everything was ravaged. Since then, the Earth is nothing more than a vast field of ruins. The Blue Planet has become black. A dead planet. Deserted from the few survivors. Mainly scientists.

Refugees on the Admiral Ship "Frida", they gave rise to the project NFO - New Original Form

(nda : in french, it's Nouvelle Forme Originelle). The human passions having destroyed the Earth, the emotions had to be declared taboo and properly erased. The scientists of the NFO then created new souls, genetically emptied of any emotional substance. Without desires. Without hate. These new souls had to compose the tissue of a new humanity, perfect in every way. Adams and Eve of synthesis. Amber, was the first of these children of the Milky Way. A Meta-Human. She had nothing to search for. She had nothing to desire. Except that the contemplation of the dead planet made her pronounce one of the "Forbidden by the Lex Words": "Why? " Yes why ? What was on Earth? But asking, was pure ineptitude. So ... Then, that strange voice, coming from nowhere, murmuring in her ear words devoid of meaning: "But what is behind the door? - And who is waiting for me? - Angel or demon, who cares ? - You are beside the Door ». Thus, the "Watcher" came to cast his shadow over her, dragging her into the meanders of the Cyberlibrary, unique vestige of the earthly past, hidden fiercely from the eyes of the too pure meta-humans. Then, he taught her little by little pieces of the story that no one else could have told her. He made her discover the stratas of human knowledge, then, finally, offered her to learn more. To taste the forbidden Streams. One after the other, to the most painful and devastating of all ...

And dear reader (man) - and you too, the beloved reader (woman) - all this is hardly festive, right? And at the same time, you would like to learn what happened to little Amber - you grew attached, that's natural. Don't worry, she escaped without physical damage from the "Watcher"'s clutches. He would never have risked getting his hands on her - living in an ultra rigid society based on the cult of life, sometimes, has its good sides . On the other hand, the morale of the girl has staggered. Seeking, in an emotion-free macrocosm, the heart's desire without even knowing if he or she exists, while carrying a jumble of cabalistic feelings and while the only extended hand is a sexual pervert who takes advantage of the situation to blackmail intelligence, there is something to depress, for sure. Amber was about to force the "game over" when she received a rematerialized message of unknown origin:

You, who stole the electric chasms's  
Beams of happiness and the key of your fate  
Join me, I'm waiting for you, and let's flourish  
Towards the fire that has brought you, magnetic amber

You can imagine, that such lines - whose structure and musicality were totally foreign to the codices of this devitalized new world - has turned our heroine upside down. Was it a trick of the "Watcher"? Perhaps, but this lamentable prospect did not prevent Amber from making the necessary decision: to discover the author of these four lines. Her ex-mentor had informed her that she was not the only one who wanted to understand what was behind the "why". So there was hope. Hope to discover love, that enigmatic love. She was quickly persuaded that it was consubstantial with the human being, whether proto, meta or beta. Her dizzying quest far exceeded the simple satisfaction of desire - she learned very quickly to appease, herself, the furious fire that consumed her belly. What does it matter, after all, who was waiting for her ? What does matter the uncertainty of the meeting ? Her journey was just beginning. And she already knew, without knowing yet the taste of impatient lips or the fury of the embrace, that she would enjoy it at every moment.

*Lyr Ic and Tabris*